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Contents

The Week 172

Editorials
- The European Prospect 175
- Ballooning Rubber 177
- Politics and Prohibition 178

General Articles
- A Few Billions for Consumers, II ..... Stuart Chase and F. J. Schlink 180
- Great Britain and the Communists ..... Harold J. Laski 183
- Who Started the War? ..... Sidney B. Fay 185
- The Tree of Night (Verse) ..... George H. Dillon 186
- The Dybbuk ..... Stark Young 187
- Lysistrata ..... Edmund Wilson 188
- Washington Notes ..... T. R. B. 189
- Twenty Days Hath September ..... Robert Littell 190

Correspondence 191

Reviews of Books
- International Courtesies ..... Robert Morss Lovett 193
- The Foremost American Puritan ..... James Truslow Adams 194
- De Anti-Christi Natura ..... Hazelton Spencer 195
- The Man Renoir ..... Rose Mary Fischkin 196
- Letters from England ..... L. M. 196
- Saint Samuel of Fleet Street ..... Virginia Woolf 197
- The Panchatantra ..... Ernest P. Horrwitz 197
- Thunder on the Left ..... M. H. 197
- Recent Fiction 198

The Week

PRESIDENT COOLIDGE has made a New Year gift of the highest value, to the nation and the world, in letting it be known that he will accept the invitation of the League to attend the disarmament conference. He has acted wisely in determining to send a strong, official delegation, and not one confined, as was at first reported, to members of the diplomatic staff and army and navy officers. We are glad to learn that the delegation is to be bi-partisan, and will include some of the ablest negotiators the country possesses. While it is true that America's direct interest will be limited to naval armament, since our army is well below any European standard which is likely to be set, even on the naval side there is work of the greatest importance urgently needing to be done. People easily forget that the Washington Conference limited only one form of naval craft—the battleship; and this only for a ten-year period, half of which has already elapsed. The real menaces of the future, the airplane, submarine and poison gas, were left untouched; and so were all the lighter types of surface craft. To secure agreement on these items will be ten times harder than it was to persuade the leading powers to stop a suicidal race toward bankruptcy in the building of the obsolescent battleship. However, if there is even a chance that it can be accomplished—and we believe there is—there is every reason why the attempt should be made.

ELSEWHERE in this issue we discuss the improved outlook in European affairs at the beginning of the New Year. That improvement is largely due of course to the signing of the Locarno pact; and it justifies more optimism than has been possible at any moment since 1914. There is danger, however, that some enthusiastic friends of the League of Nations will make "the new spirit of Locarno" a fetish and will fail to look honestly at the difficulties which still remain. No enduring peace in Europe will be possible until some arrangement has been made with Russia; and while the Soviet government is at present inclined to woo the West, it is also, as the new Russo-Turkish treaty indicates, willing to follow an alternative course if the West drives too hard a bargain. That alternative course might mean joining Turkey in a war against England over Mosul. The Balkan situation also remains gravely dangerous. Moreover, while Mussolini's new "Holy Roman Empire" may remain, as he says, only in the mind, the Roman adventurer is not at all unlikely to seek more concrete realization, perhaps by demanding new colonies in Africa or elsewhere, perhaps by attacking Jugoslavia. Either eventuality might be the beginning of a conflagration. Important as it is, the Locarno pact is no more than a beginning; the major part of the job remains to be done. And it will take a long time.

AS THE New Year opens, affairs in the Middle East are of a nature to make the outlook for 1926 anything but placid in that quarter. Assuming that the British Parliament accepts the terms of the new Irak treaty to be submitted in February, embracing the provisions of the League Council's decision, it is by no means certain that Turkey will not resort to arms to prevent that decision from going into effect. To be sure, the Angora government is

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poverty-stricken, none too firmly seated, and has in Russia only a half-hearted ally. However, these are just the circumstances which have often in the past made politicians decide to go to war. Such a war would be most embarrassing to the Baldwin government. To spend lives and money in a difficult, expensive campaign to defend the mandated territory, would be a proceeding highly unpopular at home, and one which would add fuel to flames already burning brightly in India.

ON THE heels of the revolution in Persia which has seated Reza Khan on the throne has come another change of régime in the unstable kingdom of the Hedjaz. Ibn Saud, Sultan of Nejd and leader of the Wahabis, has by his victories in the field caused the abdication of King Ali. The British, always noted for the promptitude with which they transfer their affections to the winning horse, immediately sealed his victory by signing a treaty with him. Meanwhile, in Syria the French are pursuing a painfully familiar double course: they announce loudly that the policy of de Jouvenel will be one of conciliation, designed to blot out memory of the mistakes of Sarrail, and at the same time, they are making strenuous efforts to kill as many of the Druses as possible. An agreement has just been made with the Palestine authorities that should any of these unhappy patriots seek refuge across the border they are to be returned like trapped rats for execution. This is a type of conciliation of which we have heard in other parts of the world. It is permissible, however, to have some doubt as to its effectiveness. The Druses, like the Berbers of the Riff, are a proud, fierce and indomitable people. Moreover, whatever may have been the beginnings of the present revolt, the sixth in seven years of French rule, it is now clear that all Syria is determined to throw off the yoke of France however long it takes. Those are circumstances which make maintaining "the guardianship of a backward nation" an expensive thing.

THE mandate system of the League of Nations is the least admirable aspect of the whole Geneva enterprise. The mandates of the British in Mesopotamia and the French in Syria were both awarded in flat contradiction of the wishes of the populations involved. In both cases the honor of the Allies had been expressly pledged to another arrangement. Great Britain, of course, took Mesopotamia partly for the sake of the Mosul oil, partly because it fitted in with her Persian policy, partly for the general diplomatic and military advantages. Never has the economic motive in imperialism been more flagrantly exposed than in British policy in the Middle East, where the British government's partial ownership and complete control of the oil companies holding the chief concessions is not even camouflaged. The whole chapter is one of sordid imperialism for which, though the Mesopotamian mandate has been better conducted than that of the French in Syria, there is nothing to be said.

PRESIDENT COOLIDGE makes a solemn pilgrimage to the central west and tells the farmers that the government will help them with credit and will stand by their coöperatives, but that any proposal such as that for a governmental corporation to dispose of surplus crops abroad and maintain prices at home is economically unsound and will not be supported. The farmers thereupon have another meeting by themselves and with some indignation decide that they still want the governmental corporation. And it is reported that Mr. Coolidge, like the good politician he is, is about to back down and allow the farmers to have a measure which he says is economically unsound. We agree with the farmers that credit and coöperatives in the present form are not enough. But we do not think that any governmental guarantee of prices through an export corporation can turn the trick for very long. The trouble with it at bottom is that it involves no machinery for permanent adjustment of supply to demand, without which production is likely to grow to such unwieldy proportions that no government could continue to furnish large enough subsidies to maintain the price. If the farmers want to get away from the evils of a world in which they alone are subject to the devasting uncertainties of competition, they must devise a means of restricting production, which is the only method ever devised by business men, British rubber growers or governments to control prices.

IF, AS is predicted, the Democrats in Congress with insurgent Republican allies turn down the debt settlement with Italy because it demands too little payment they will accomplish a desirable end for precisely the wrong reason. The economic objection to the settlement is that is promises more in the future than can possibly be paid, in return for easily manageable payments in the present. The reason for this subterfuge is Italy's desire to borrow more now from private sources. The deception might possibly be excusable if there were any good reason for the new loans, but we believe these are highly undesirable both politically and economically. This government is under no obligation to stultify itself to help out the Fascist dictatorship. Nor ought it to be an accomplice in fastening heavy burdens on future generations of Italian peasants and workmen. Opposition Congressmen are in error, however, when they argue that since Italy can pay 6 or 7 percent on new private loans she can pay more than 1 or 2 percent on her war debt. The war loans were unproductive in the sense that they led to no permanent increase in productive capacity, while new loans might conceivably aid the functioning of industry. We doubt, however, whether sufficiently increased productivity will actually result in this instance to justify even the private loans.

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ANTHRACITE operators have gone into conference with the miners without modifying one iota their position adopted last summer which led to the strike. They still demand an agreement in advance to arbitrate all questions remaining unsettled in conference, and resumption of work pending a settlement. We believe, and have several times explained the ground for our belief, that the miners have been justified in refusing these demands. We suggested, early in the strike, however, that they might accept arbitration if the operators would in turn consent to impartial continuous publicity of accounts and the proper standardization of practices with regard to such things as valuation and depletion charges. This, particularly if accompanied by some measure of profit pooling, would permit increasing wages without increasing prices. Such a program formed part of the Pinchot proposal, accepted by the miners. There is no reason why the miners' officials should not now propose these conditions for arbitration, though they need not put the Pinchot label on them, since the operators are childishly afraid of his name and do not want to play with him. The possibilities of explaining to the public the desirability and justice of the program are far from exhausted however. And if the miners accept the operators' terms without condition, their long sacrifice will have been fruitless either for themselves or the public.

THE newspapers have been full of obituaries of Frank A. Munsey, the New York millionaire newspaper and grocery owner and Wall Street plunger who died last week. The most interesting which we have seen appeared in the Emporia (Kans.) Gazette, and we reprint it entire:

> Frank Munsey, the great publisher, is dead.
>
> Frank Munsey contributed to the journalism of his day the talent of a meat packer, the morals of a money changer and the manners of an undertaker. He and his kind have about succeeded in transforming a once noble profession into an 8 percent security.
>
> May he rest in trust!

Not everyone would state the case as vigorously as does William Allen White; but his main judgment is one with which we feel most journalists who had had an opportunity for watching the career of Mr. Munsey closely will agree. His life divided itself into two parts. In its first phase he was the youthful owner of magazines, with a real talent as a popular publisher, who sat up all night writing serial stories, and in a few years' time pulled himself up from his initial forty dollars of capital to being a millionaire. While the magazines laid the foundation of his wealth, its greater part came from Wall Street speculation and business. In his later years, having ample funds to play with, he assumed his best-known rôle, that of newspaper proprietor. Over and over he bought newspapers and "killed" them, either combining them or seeing their circulations dwindle because the public did not care for the sort of papers he produced. All told, he had owned seventeen dailies in various cities. Of these he sold eight, some of them at heavy losses. Of the others all but three had been combined with other papers owned by himself. One he suspended. While some of his papers had earned him substantial profits, it is probable that the balance sheet on his whole newspaper career showed a heavy loss.

THIS is the more interesting because he always insisted that a newspaper should be regarded strictly as a business property. He bought and suppressed journals without any reference to their importance as social agencies, and seemed entirely unmoved by criticism of himself when he destroyed papers with hundreds of thousands of loyal readers, throwing out of employment scores and hundreds of newspaper workers. So far as could be ascertained from his published statements, and from the manner in which he conducted his enterprises, a good newspaper meant to him only one which earned large profits—though he also insisted that his publications should, in political matters, reflect his own views. In the latter years of his life these were usually reactionary. Remorseless in the pursuit of his own aims, he had few friends among those associated with him in his enterprises, and almost none outside their ranks. This well-known fact makes somewhat surprising the voluminous stream of messages from the great of the land asserting that in his death they had suffered a loss so keen and personal that it could hardly be borne.

NEARLY two years ago, a resolution of the U. S. Senate asked the Federal Trade Commission to investigate the allegation that a "bread trust" exists in the United States, the operations of which are illegal and contrary to public policy. It is not surprising that this investigation has not been completed, nor any important facts made public. There is a Coolidge majority on the Federal Trade Commission, and the Coolidge administration is in no mood for muckraking. Now comes the People's Legislative Service of Washington with a memorial to the House and Senate stating that a Congressional investigation of the matter is urgently desirable. We summarize the charges by the Service:

> That the new combination of United Bakeries Corporation, Ward Baking Company, General Baking Company, and fifty or more subsidiaries now control more than 50 percent of the commercial bread production of the United States.
>
> That it will be able to dictate the price of flour.
>
> That its assets, including large items of good will, are about $141,000,000, though stocks and bonds are outstanding to a value of $372,000,000 and a capitalization is proposed of over a billion.
>
> That payment of dividends on such an inflated capitalization will necessitate profiteering at the expense of the consumer.
>
> That unjustified profits in the past are shown by the advance in the General Baking Company's original stock from $2 to $1350 a share.

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That the number of independent bakeries in the United States decreased by 3,249 in the four years, 1919-23.

That it is no longer possible for the housewife to meet high prices by baking her own bread, due to the fact that apartment houses, in which a large and increasing proportion of our city population dwells, are not equipped with suitable ovens.

The American Federation of Labor, at its recent convention, demanded an investigation of the "bread trust." If the charges of the People's Legislative Service come anywhere near the truth (and there is good reason to believe they do) an investigation by some agency which will really investigate is not only desirable but imperative.

The European Prospect

THE outlook on January 1, 1926, for a sensible and healing conduct of world politics is substantially better than it was on January 1, 1925. There are still many incipient class and national conflicts which, if they are allowed to fester, will prevent the European political bodies from recuperating. But these causes for anxiety are less pressing and ominous than they were. They are, one by one, being soothed, if not wholly eliminated. Moreover, the process of elimination begins to assume some semblance of order and progress. One bit of sanity, one example of mutual accommodation and adjustment, leads to another. So far as Europe is concerned, they all point in a distinguishable and a desirable direction. We can envisage a prospect of national and international recovery towards which the western nations may, if they know what they are about, proceed steadily during the next fifty years. Let us take a look at the vista.

The strain of the war exposed all the faults in the old social and political organizations of Europe. The weakest parts of the structure in Russia, Austria-Hungary and Germany collapsed as the result of privation and defeat; and the Treaty of Peace, when it came, took advantage of this collapse for the benefit of the victors without dealing with the causes of the weakness. On January 1, 1920, Europe and to a smaller extent the whole world was a mass of overheated political and economic problems, almost any one of which, if it were allowed to get out of hand, might provoke a general conflagration. It seemed for the moment as if the political leadership of the western nations were too irrevocably obsessed by the illusions and the passions of the war to bring to the government of the world the mixture of patience, discrimination, conciliation, circumspection and invention which the finding of a way out of their vexatious problems demanded

For several years these statesmen justified the worst which could be said of them. They did nothing to promote general European economic and political recovery. Yet during the interval some of them did dispose of two possible sources of conflict which, while not either essentially or exclusively European, nevertheless involved questions as difficult and as anxious as those presented by the unsettlement of the European continent. In the first place Great Britain and Ireland negotiated a peace which required concessions on both sides but which called for greater concessions on the part of the stronger than of the weaker of the two negotiators. Great Britain with the practical consent of her imperialist party conceded to Ireland an amount of autonomy which, if it had been seriously proposed before the war, would probably have aroused armed resistance. At about the same time the Washington Conference relieved two other causes of tension. It put an end to the competitive building of capital ships on the part of the United States, Great Britain and Japan by setting up a ratio among them which gave to each maritime power supremacy in its own waters, but relative impotence elsewhere. It set up an international agency for the future handling of the problems of the Pacific which implied at least a temporary withdrawal by Japan of its imperialist designs on China. These settlements called for the abandonment by stronger nations of a politics of power with respect to weaker nations which, according to pre-war standards of exclusive national interest, might have been justified.

The lesson for the European continent was obvious. Mr. Lloyd George tried to follow these good examples by summoning a European conference at Genoa, to which the two outcasts, Russia and Germany, were invited, but the refusal of the French government to coöperate frustrated his good intentions. There followed a period of two years in which France, under the leadership of M. Poincaré, seemed determined in her own imaginary interest to wreck the foundations of European social order. She pushed to the limit her policy of trying to disintegrate and ruin Germany. It looked for a while as if she would succeed, but Germany, like Ireland, grimly resisted, and at the last moment France, like Great Britain, shrank from following through the policy of national egotism. British and American mediation was accepted. The Dawes plan was drawn up. During the summer of 1924 Herriot and MacDonald put it into effect. The French army retired from the Ruhr. The French government partly surrendered its right to wage legal war on Germany. Little by little the French politicians apparently abandoned the policy of keeping Germany terrorized in the alleged interest of France's safety. Then came the negotiations which culminated at Locarno and which represented on the part of France the renunciation of some of the benefits of her present military preponderance in Europe. Unlike the former ostensibly defensive alliances, the new treaties assumed that security in order to be genuine must be general, that a trustworthy defensive organization of Europe implied the abandonment by all of aggressive policies and armaments. It is the longest step which has ever been

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taken in the direction of organized European security and peace based upon a guarantee of mutual inoffensiveness.

The Locarno compact testified to the increasing reality of new and better standards in European and world politics. Like the Washington agreements and the recognition of Irish independence, it was equivalent to the renunciation by more powerful nations of the right to use their force in a manner which would be perilous and offensive to their weaker neighbors. Of course, this alleged right was not abandoned willingly. Great Britain with respect to Ireland, Japan with respect to China, and France with respect to Germany, all discovered that, in the existing economic and political conditions of the world, they could not take advantage of their superior force without exhausting themselves, incurring dangerous enmities abroad, and, perhaps, ruining their victims; and at the time the world could not tolerate any more ruin. But the comparative inoffensiveness which is implied by these renunciations is rendered more rather than less real by the fact that it was not wholly voluntary. It no longer pays to the same extent that it formerly did to use the accident of superior force to overrule other peoples.

The Great War and its results rendered possible the realization of these improved standards. It turned out to be a war not intentionally to end war, but accidentally to show up war and a policy based on war, as at the present time futile and intolerable. The three military empires which had lived and ruled by war perished as the result of their own internal weakness. They could not survive the moral strain of prolonged and exhaustive fighting as well as their less militarist opponents. They were the product of an aggressive foreign policy which annexed without assimilating national minorities. As such they never had subscribed to a self-denying ordinance such as the Locarno compact. They had to be overthrown or profoundly modified before it became possible to organize peace in Europe on the basis of a mutual guarantee of security. The disintegration or the deflation of the military empires, which the peace treaties accomplished, divided Europe into smaller parts all of which cherished their independence but none of which was capable of standing alone. France became for the moment much the most powerful nation in Europe, but her military preponderance and her alliances with the succession states did not give the French people or their satellites any sense of safety. An irresistible army plus limited guarantees, such as those among the little Entente or between France and Poland, were not enough. The independence of the increased number of smaller nations could not become sufficiently certain unless it was written by general consent into the public law of Europe. No liberty and no insurance for these numerous little nations without federation.

Locarno probably prophesies the advent of a union of independent European nationalities. There are many serious obstacles, created to a large extent by the Treaty of Versailles, to the formation of such a union, but they are not as insuperable as the old military empires were before the war. If Locarno is followed by some limitation of armaments and the good faith of the agreements is thereby established, it will be possible to remove the obstacles. A guarantee of security by all and for all has one great advantage. It enables statesmen to isolate clashes of interest among different European nations and to deal with each of them on their merits as the opportunity for a particular application of a general rule. As long as all disputes implying as they did the possibility of arbitration by war, involved questions of security, it was impossible to separate them out of a whole tangled mass of interests which composed both sides of the balance of power. But as soon as nations feel secure, they are free to disentangle one question after another and adjust it. They not only can, but they must, set up some arbitral machinery which will be able to deal by legislation with those troublesome legacies from the past which are not compatible with a really federated Europe.

Such is the better prospect in international politics which is clearly visible at the beginning of 1926. The general direction is unmistakable. The immediate objective, that of some limitation of armaments, is officially under consideration and appears to be attainable. But it will not be attainable without forcing European statesmen to prepare for the next step, which is the negotiation of an arrangement with Soviet Russia. It may be impossible and undesirable to include Russia within the scope of the general territorial guarantees. She does not need to be guaranteed any more than Great Britain or the United States needs it. Yet if she remains outside it must be as a friend or an ally rather than as a threat, or else the vision of European security and union will fade away. After Russia is neutralized or taken in and Europe is comparatively disarmed, the most novel, difficult and obscure part of the work of European unification will heave into sight. Europe will then have to learn how to deal by consent and without violence with the established obstacles to its increasing unity—a task which will strain the competence of any existing political technique. European statesmen will have to legislate without setting up a legislature. They will have to find some way to accomplish volutarily those changes in boundaries, in economic opportunity and in international institutions which, if neglected, will in some way or other have their revenge by threatening to bring about a renewal of discord and violence. This part of the prospect is, of course, still obscure. Only a vista illuminated by a remote star is visible. But Europe is bound to move in the direction of the star or else lose not only its former leadership among the continents but quite possibly its political independence and its economic prosperity.

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Ballooning Rubber

THERE is danger that every blow-out in the United States will sound to exasperated automobilists like a shot aimed in the general direction of Westminster, with rubber that used to be 17 cents a pound in 1922 risen to $1.00 and Secretary Hoover saying heatedly that it is the fault of a wicked monopoly fostered by the British government. The National Rubber Association, The National Automobile Chamber of Commerce, and the Department of Commerce are arming for war. Talk is heard of developing other sources of supply; Mr. Firestone has gone into Liberia; we are urged to cut down our consumption; Mr. Hoover in an article in the December Current History points out that we can play the same game with raw materials originating here, and argues against all control of production and for good old-fashioned competition.

Now, we deplore the present high price of rubber. But we have no fear that the battle is not going to be waged vigorously and effectively. Therefore we beg to be excused for a few moments, if, instead of adding our feeble voice to the thundering multitudes, we pause to throw a few side lights on the situation. In the first place, what is the "rubber monopoly," what is the "Stevenson scheme," and how does it operate?

Fact one is that rubber, which fifteen years ago came largely from wild trees in Brazil, now comes largely from tame ones in the East Indies, since cultivated plantation rubber is available in larger quantities and is superior in quality and uniformity. Fact two is that about 70 percent of the supply comes from plantations in the British Empire, and most of the rest from the Dutch East Indies. Fact three is that we use about 70 percent of the output.

Rubber plantations were profitable during the War. It takes a rubber tree six years to get into production. Therefore output continued to increase beyond the limit of demand, and beginning with the world-wide trade slump of 1921 there was marked overproduction. Prices fell below the cost of production, and widespread bankruptcies were threatened. If no concerted action had been taken many plantations would have been abandoned, and the restriction of production might well have been far greater than any that actually occurred. Here the British government stepped in. On the recommendation of a Committee of the Colonial Office headed by Lord Stevenson, the following plan was adopted. A standard production was fixed for each producer, equalling his actual output for the year beginning November, 1919. An export duty of not more than 1d. per pound was put on the first 60 percent of the standard output. If 65 percent was exported, the duty was raised to 4d. Thence it increased by 1d. stages for every additional 5 percent exported, until at the full standard production the duty reached 1s. The effect was, of course, not merely to add the export duty to the price which would have existed without it, but to exert an upward influence on prices through the restriction of export itself.

Naturally, the result of such a plan, its justice to producers on the one hand and to consumers on the other, would depend on how closely the 60 percent of the standard production matched the effective demand at a fair price. It was foreseen that this percentage might have to be raised or lowered. Therefore the plan contained the further provision that if the average price of crude rubber at London had stood at 1s. 3d. for three consecutive months the percentage paying normal duty would automatically be raised to 65 percent, if at 1s. 6d., the percentage would be raised to 70. If the price fell below 1s. for three months the percentage would be reduced to 55. Thus were possible minor fluctuations in demand allowed for.

The essentials of this ingenious scheme are obviously not in themselves inseparable from monopolistic extortion. Extortion can result if the standard or the percentage is too low, or the progressive duties are too high; likewise poverty to the producers can result from the reverse state of affairs. But with well adjusted duties, the object of such a plan might well be, and was claimed to be in this instance, to prevent unduly wide fluctuations in production or prices, and thus to avoid the economic waste which always accompanies an exaggerated cycle of booms and depressions. Indeed it is arguable that even under the percentages and duties as they are, consumers of rubber are today paying lower prices than they would have paid, had a large number of plantations been allowed to fail and go out of production in 1922, thus drastically decreasing the supply for a long period of years.

In defense of the plan it may also be pointed out that the high prices quoted in the press are not those being paid by the large consumers who order in advance on contract, but those existing in the "spot" market, where consumers whose requirements are not covered by contract are paying the penalty of a temporary scarcity. Nevertheless the contract prices are undoubtedly too high. This probably arises from the fact that the limit of export was drawn too strictly in view of the subsequent growth of demand in our market, unforeseen at the time, due to the great expansion in the use of automobiles and the invention of the balloon tire.

Is the remedy, as Mr. Hoover seems to think, abandonment of the restrictive plan altogether and a giving way to free play of demand and supply? It may be, of course, that no such overproduction as was occasioned during the War, which brought on the crisis, will ever occur again, and that a perfectly free market will be relatively stable. But the history of other commodity markets does not lead us to suppose so. Alternate gluts and scarcities, wide price changes, are the normal aspect of unregulated markets in a dynamic world. If, for

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instance, after an unchecked deflation in 1922, no curb had been applied to a rubber production stimulated since then by soaring demand and high prices, and the output of the plantations had begun a growth which could not be checked for several years, they might have arrived with an immense quantity of rubber at a market in 1927 or 1928 in which demand was curtailed because of a general depression, or because a saturation point had been reached in the sale of automobiles. In that case the world would have suffered the waste of producing large amounts of rubber which it could not use, and then the additional waste of losing more plantations than it could afford to spare.

In our opinion the Stevenson plan is an ingenious and useful economic device which needs, not smashing, but proper adjustment. The trouble is that the consumers are not consulted as to its specific provisions. Let the consumers organize and dicker with the producers, let the cost of production be impartially analyzed, let demand forecasts be made, and let the plan be readjusted from time to time to correspond with a price agreed upon as fair. This, we think, is the intelligent, the efficient way out.

Mr. Hoover threatens that we can apply monopolistic methods of controlling production and price to cotton, to wheat and other commodities which we provide. Well, why not? This is undoubtedly the tendency of the times, and there is much to be gained by it. The true objection is not so much to monopoly, as to unchecked monopoly, to monopoly in which the consumer has not a sufficient voice. We shall credit Mr. Hoover with greater sincerity when he demands the smashing of the anthracite monopoly in the United States, or with greater wisdom when he becomes as excited over controlling it as he does over controlling British rubber. It is highly important to work out a scientific technique of joint control by producer and consumer, not merely when one is British and the other American, but when both are American or British, or when both cross national boundaries. To do so would eliminate waste and injustice, and would in the end make obvious and utilize the existing interdependence of nations and economic groups.

Politics and Prohibition

AMERICAN party politics seems at times to be chiefly a device for preventing issues which may excite popular feeling and involve bitter conflicts from being put up to the American people. Since the end of the Civil War practically all the more important political decisions which have been embodied in federal legislation have been reached without a national election which turned on the issue and which divided the two major parties. Civil Service reform, railroad regulation, the popular election of senators of the United States, a national income tax, votes for women and prohibition have all been adopted without a partisan battle and without any express special consultation of public opinion. The two parties have fought one or two elections on the reform of the tariff, but seemingly for that reason the tariff has never been reformed much or for long. National elections have depended chiefly upon a choice between personalities and upon minor or unreal issues. Whenever leaders appeared such as Bryan, Roosevelt or LaFollette who tried to force important issues into party politics the system operated to neutralize or eliminate them. The decision to spend $25,000,000,000 in money and to conscript the youth of America in a European political quarrel, the most important decision of the last fifty years, was taken without reference to the American people. Since 1870 the only national elections whose results expressed clear and important decisions on the part of the American voters were those of 1896 and 1920.

There are many reasons why American party politics operates rather to neutralize important issues than to define and emphasize them. Some of them are connected with the nature of the American constitutional system and tend to safeguard the country against the possible danger of submitting vexatious decisions to such a huge, diversified and sometimes headstrong electorate. But however profound the causes may be for this characteristic of American politics, the human agents who are responsible for it and benefit by it are undoubtedly the party politicians. It is one of their chief professional duties to keep important issues from being referred to the American people. They need for the perpetuation of their power a subservient popular following which will vote usually for one or the other of the party labels or for some popular personality nominated by a party but which will rarely allow interests or convictions to guide its choices. Voters who are conscious of interests or who are aroused to convictions about issues are unmanageable. They interfere with the power of the professional politician to predict the results of particular elections. He makes his living out of the pulling of wires and the knowledge in advance as to how the voters will dance.

Despite, however, the best endeavors of the professional politicians, a peculiarly unmanageable issue may soon be submitted to the American people at a national election. We refer, of course, to prohibition. The success of the politicians in keeping the prohibition issue out of party politics and in securing or permitting the adoption of the amendment without any thorough-going consultation of the American people was their greatest achievement in the art of political manipulation. Probably the paralysis of public opinion which took place under the influence of war propaganda alone rendered it possible but by whatever means the politicians were glad to get it, as they thought, out of the way. They were afraid of it. The membership of both parties was divided on it and the anti-saloon vote interfered with the safety of many congressional and legisla-

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tive districts. But a large minority of the American people were wholly unprepared for this result and since the amendment was adopted, they have revenged themselves on their rulers by voting against prohibition in a very effective way. They have brazenly and unscrupulously broken the law. They realized that, if the law were successfully enforced, it would be impossible to amend or repeal it. They decided, consequently, with a perfectly clear conscience and as a means of discrediting the law simply not to obey it. They calculated that disobedience was the only method whereby the issue could be returned to politics for agitation and a new decision. They are now apparently about to carry their protest to its appropriate conclusion and exert political pressure on behalf of modification or repeal of the law.

If they do, if they successfully follow the example of the Anti-Saloon League and organize blocs of "wet" voters in every congressional district, it may well be that, despite the politicians, the next presidential election will be fought on the prohibition issue. On another page of this number our Washington correspondent predicts that the wets will elect a majority of the members of the next House of Representatives. They will certainly attempt to do so, and they will either succeed or come close to success. In either event they will occupy the first session of the new Congress two years from now with a furious struggle to modify the Volstead act. The drys on their part will probably counter-attack by proposing some plan for enforcing the law which will increase the penalties and diminish the opportunities for its violation. The resulting fight in Congress will certainly be inconclusive. It will have to be passed on to the American people at the coming presidential election.

The obstacles to any such reference will, however, be extremely powerful and should not be underestimated. The Republican politicians, headed by the President himself, will have every inducement and possibly enough power to prevent it. It would introduce an incalculable element into the election and a disruptive force into Republican politics. If the matter were left wholly in their hands, they would succeed, but it will not be left to them. The aggressive anti-Prohibitionist faction is found among the urban Democrats of the North, and they apparently are ready to insist on the nomination of Governor Smith as the wet candidate for President. With the two-thirds rule in force, we do not see how they can prevail in the next convention, but if the Smith faction wages the fight in the same militant and irreconcilable spirit which it brought to the campaign against Mr. McAdoo's nomination in the last convention, it will probably split the party and result in the running of Al Smith as the wet candidate. Superficially the Republicans would have no reason to weep over such a mutiny or schism in the ranks of the Democrats, but they would really have small reason for rejoicing. If Coolidge ran as a dry candidate, the Republican party would suffer severely in many parts of the country. If he tried to straddle, he would have to pay the same kind of penalty. Of course he would in any event almost certainly be elected, but as a result of the fight an acid ferment might have been introduced into American party politics which would alter in incalculable ways and with dangerous results the old alignments and the old party loyalties.

If the anti-Prohibitionists do project the issue into national politics, they will provoke the bitterest conflict in which the American people have engaged since the Civil War. The advocates of prohibition are for the present fiercely resolved not to yield an inch. Because of the social evils which are connected with the liquor traffic and the association of the wets with the law-breakers, they are entirely convinced of their own righteousness and of the turpitude of their opponents. It will be a holy war on their part in which they will figure in their own eyes as the guardians of the American home and of the sanctity of civic obligations. Of course the wets on their side will also find it necessary after the manner of American politics to generalize and sharpen the issue into moral war. They will try to fasten on the drys the stigma of narrowness, fanaticism, intolerance, illiberality and an excessive belief in dictation by the government. The war if it occurs, will cut deep into many amiable conventions and harmonies of American social and political life. The drys will represent a sectional group—viz., the inhabitants of the small towns, a cultural tradition—viz., moralistic protestantism, and a racial prejudice—viz., that of the native-born. The wets will represent chiefly the recently arrived population of the large cities with their diverse racial origin and their dislocated culture, their lively sensibilities, their extreme suggestibility and their preference for free manners and easy standards. If the conflict persists, they will probably triumph in the end, for the American city is expanding and the American countryside is shrinking, but it will be a long fight, and it will as it proceeds, introduce unforeseen and insubordinate motives and characters into the American political and social drama.

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EDITORS

HERBERT CROLY BRUCE BLIVEN ROBERT LITTELL
ALVIN JOHNSON GEORGE SOULE STARK YOUNG
ROBERT MORSS LOVETT

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

JANE ADDAMS JOHN DEWEY EDMUND WILSON
GILBERT SELDES E. C. LINDEMAN LEO WOLMAN
WALDO FRANK

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A Few Billions for Consumers

II

IN a preceding article we noted how the Bureau of Standards through its testing laboratories, saves the government $100,000,000 a year in purchasing material and supplies. (Question: How much alleged governmental inefficiency and red tape does this $100,000,000 offset?) We noted that if the current tests could be made available to the consumer at large, a billion or more could be saved. Finally, if the methodology of buying according to test and specification could be extended to all products—except those bought for conspicuous consumption or on purely æsthetic grounds—the savings to the American people would be staggering in their immensity. But we ended on the melancholy note that any such thoroughgoing application of the principle would inevitably capsize the bulk of competitive advertising and high pressure salesmanship, and so deprive our industrial life of its most picaresque quality. . . . Onerous indeed is the responsibility of him who would substitute bread for circuses.

The wife of one of the authors of this article is engaged in building a house for the family just outside New York, acting as her own contractor. She knows pretty well what she wants and the specific purpose for which she wants it. She does not have to worry about stone, for we have it on the place. She does not have to worry about cement for the quality of cement is nationally standardized. She does not have to worry very much about lumber, for lumber is on the way to being standardized. But she has worried interminably about boilers, water heaters, plumbing fixtures, roofing paper, permanent roof material, metal weather strips, floor coverings, electric stoves, plasters and wall coatings, paints, insulating compounds, and hardware finishings. To name a few. For each she has waded through piles of highly colored and alluring circulars; received an untold tonnage of samples; and listened to the exhortations of heaven knows how many up-and-coming salesmen. . . . With the offerings of each competitor so clearly and obviously the best, how is it possible—save by tossing up a coin—to make a choice? In despair she has gone to the Good Housekeeping Institute. The "best" was narrowed by two or three, but a perplexing number still remained. The Institute being connected with one of the greatest advertising media in the country, cannot afford to play any favorites, it can only eliminate the obviously inferior. Furthermore its field is limited to household appliances, and no help is available on construction materials.

We would have had a better and a cheaper house, the lady would have avoided the danger of a nervous collapse—the variety of trade names alone, Boarines, Boxlinums, and Bellotexes, is enough to start a neurosis—untold paper, ink, sample materials and salesmen's time and overhead would have been saved, if we had access to an impartial testing bureau which would have told us the best product for a given purpose. Or which could have told us what products on the market met recognized and reasonable specifications already arrived at by test. And as was pointed out last week, the best article for the purpose may or may not be the highest priced article in the class. One make of door hinge recently tested proved to have a life forty times that of its higher priced competitors.

Failing such impartial advice, the benefits of cumulative technical knowledge do not get to the consumer—or they get to him late in the day, bearing a staggering overhead cost. Advertising can give proved quality a head start and beat it nine times out of ten—witness the traffic in shoddy radio sets and loud speakers. For building materials, architects have available several thousand specifications. But only two are in common use. Why? Because no single architect can afford to maintain a testing bureau of his own, or pay the necessary fees to chemists, physicists and engineers to find out whether the products he is using live up to the specification. But with a central bureau, the architect could at once begin to put specifications to work, with an immense saving to his clients, in the aggregate. Architects and builders order $2,000,000,000 of products in a year. As it is now, the consuming public does most of the experimental work on the costly principle of trial and error; of getting stuck and trying something else. Bewildered by advertising and scores of products in the field all equally "the best," what would it not mean to the intelligent buyer to have the ground cleared, and the best and the next best, and so on, determined before he pays his money down?

Nor would the ultimate consumer be the only beneficiary. The manufacturer would benefit in at least three ways. If he makes sound goods, the competition of inferior goods will tend to be forced off the market or down to the price level where they belong. His own purchases of supplies will be equally protected by specification and test. Finally he will have a much better chance to manufacture his product in large quantities, saleable in any market because the quality is known and maintained, and thus he will be enabled to balance its operating load by keeping steadily at work at approximate capacity. Which will go far to liquidate his labor troubles. Under such an arrangement, advertising will shift to its legitimate field of informing the public about new products, new processes, or of opening new markets.

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The advantage to the business man is not a matter of theory only. The electrical industry is already blazing a trail in the field of specifications and standards. At first it was only purchasers of electric motors who wanted to know what was meant — if anything — by a "one horse power motor." The question did not immediately interest the manufacturers who were too busy advertising the obvious fact that their one horse power motor was bigger and better and more powerful than anybody else's. But when specifications were actually put into effect for the industry, they found that it was more satisfactory to compete on price and service covering a perfectly definite product, than to waste futile effort proving that one horse power was one and a half horse power.

Before the adoption of the Boiler Code, manufacturers were frequently involved in costly litigation following boiler explosions, in which they had to try and prove that the failure was not due to error in design. The plaintiff of course tried to show that the design was bad. Learned counsel waged a long and expensive war of opinion. With the coming of the Boiler Construction Code such wars ceased. Correctness of design was standardized and officially certified in the light of the best knowledge available. As new knowledge develops, new principles and practices will be duly codified. Standardization of this sort does not delimit the technical art, but on the contrary, as exemplified particularly in the electric lamp and the telephone, tends to quicken it.

The balance sheet of those organizations which are already committed to tests, specifications and standards is already impressive. Besides the work of the Bureau of Standards already described, and the national clearing house provided by the American Engineering Standards Committee (a federation of thirty-five societies, trade associations and government agencies), there is in the government, the safety work of the Interstate Commerce Commission which has been a chief factor in reducing railroad accidents; the Steamboat Inspection Service; the Food and Drugs control of the Department of Agriculture—which has markedly reduced adulteration in food stuffs and the more exotic brands of patent medicines; and the Insecticide and Fungicide Board of the Department of Agriculture. The work of the latter is particularly instructive. Tests were begun in 1911 following a cry from the farmers that their bug-killing powders, sprays and lotions were failing to produce the expected casualties. The Board's chemists discovered among other things that an insect powder known as pyrethrum was often adulterated with ground-up stems and daisy flowers—when, to be effective, it should be pure chrysanthemum flowers of certain species. The Board took over quality control of all materials entering into interstate commerce, or imported from abroad—including the supervision of claims, statements and labels. It rooted out misbranding and adulteration in disinfectants and insecticides. Prosecutions—and this is a very important point—are few; publication of laboratory facts about competing brands is sufficient to keep the products up to standard.

In addition to these federal bureaus, we have various testing organizations, particularly in the field of weights and measures and of milk, foods, and drugs, in state and municipal governments. Nor should it be forgotten that Great Britain, Canada, Germany and Czecho-Slovakia have developed trade-marked symbols for products made to nationally recognized specifications, enabling consumers to tell at a glance whether the article meets the requirements of quality set up by the National Engineering Standards Committees.

Following government bureaus and standards committees, the balance sheet includes the testing laboratories and specification departments of a few great private corporations—the Bell Telephone System, the Westinghouse Company, the General Electric. In the field of specifications, no less than twenty-five trade associations have begun to function to a very considerable extent. The railroads have done pioneer work in standardization, and for many years have made the work of writing purchase specifications and devising standard designs of warning signals, couplers, lanterns, one of their most important activities. Railroads could hardly be operated without standards—bridges must not fall down, locomotive boilers must not blow up, drawbars must not part, airbrakes must take hold, signals must light and the right color must flash.

Lumber manufacturers are grading lumber according to Department of Commerce standards; the American Petroleum Institute permits the use of its monogram on certain tested and proven supplies for the industry; the National Malleable Castings Association retains expert metallurgists to maintain quality standards among its members; the National Grain Dealers have adopted the federal grain standards for the grading of cereals, and expel members who are found violating the code. The American Gas Association is starting a testing laboratory; even the Knitted Underwear Manufacturers are using labels for sizes worked out by the Bureau of Standards. The insurance interests in the Underwriters' Laboratories have excellent facilities to test, certify and label enormous quantities of electrical and other material involving life, fire and collision hazard, and theft and accident prevention. Many electrical supplies, however, which are quite unsafe both to persons and property are sold without regard to underwriters' approval, because the public has not the information on which to judge the significance of such approval.

Coming closer to the ultimate consumer, we note the Good Housekeeping Institute, the Popular Science Institute of Standards, the Modern Priscilla laboratory and the New York Herald-Tribune

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Institute and a few others. These bureaus are good as far as they go, but the number of consumers who are influenced by their findings is necessarily limited, and the pressure of the advertiser is in some cases great. They are honest, but with one or two distinguished exceptions, they feel that they cannot afford to alienate advertisers by showing the relative rating or technical standing of different brands. Also their facilities for research are—as compared with the Bureau of Standards, or the large industrial research laboratories—very meagre.

The map of American industry is thus more or less spotted with the experimental beginnings of tests and specifications for buying goods. Outstripping all others are the large red spots which mark the government services and the engineering societies and associations coöperating under the Engineering Standard Committee. But outside the federal government there is no large attempt to correlate and unify the experiment stations, and above all there are only very feeble and uncoördinated attempts to allow the ultimate consumer a share in the potential benefits and savings, except in so far as he benefits indirectly by virtue of standardization carried on by the manufacturer. There is as yet very little demand from the ultimate consumer. He does not know about it in the first place, and he isn't organized in the second place. There is, however, an emerging demand for tested products from some large intermediate consumers.

Possible mediums through which the small consumer might organize a demand are the organized labor movement, the women's clubs, the teachers' unions, producers and consumers' coöperative associations. The great mail-order houses like Sears Roebuck might do much for the consumer in this respect—as well as save postage, endless filling out of forms, and bookkeeping, on goods returned.

This then is the field. If consumers' demand can make itself felt, and if reliable testing bureaus and laboratories can be maintained on a sufficient scale to meet the demand—an enormous aggregate of industrial waste can be eliminated, and enormous savings made. The practical problems are how to organize the consumer, and under what auspices to maintain the testing bureaus. These problems are not to be answered in what is left of our space. The whole concept is so new that constructive analysis and thinking have only just begun to go to work. The chief reason why these articles are written is in the hope that the facts presented will lead to some constructive thinking.

In respect to the organization of testing stations, a few general observations will perhaps be permissible. The supervision of weights and measures is an immemorial government function. The best existing testing mediums are now in the government service. Both by tradition and by technical experience, the federal government presents important reasons why it should be the logical custodian of the proposed laboratories. On the other hand, there are also good reasons why the manufacturer through his trade associations should do the job himself. Self-discipline is the best discipline. But there are very grave temptations—commercial ethics being what they often are—to deteriorate self-imposed standards, or to use the standards as a flying advertising squadron to "break down sales resistance" as against some allied industry which has no testing facilities wherewith its products may be properly described and defended. The tangle might become so bad that the government would have to straighten it out in the end. This is no "insidious entering wedge" of socialism, it must be remembered; the government does not propose to make anything or build anything, it only proposes to supply certified information. Incidentally the cost of this information will not exceed ten cents per capita per year.

If our coöperative associations had the strength of those in Denmark, or even in England, perhaps their central organization would be the ideal one to carry out the program. They are the ultimate consumer made manifest. But they are not strong enough as yet in America to make the proposal a practicable one. Perhaps the laboratories of universities, particularly state universities, might grasp the opportunity to perform an important public service, as well as to give their students of chemistry, physics and mechanics something highly interesting and useful to do. One would almost brave college again for the opportunity of dissecting a vacuum cleaner to see if it ought to sweep as it beats as it cleans; of debunking radio advertisements, of determining if the Buick promise is indeed fulfilled. But whatever else is done, the whole program will fall in odium and shame if special influence ever makes its way into the test tube. The work must be kept impartial and everyone must know it.

Perhaps the best way out is a bureau controlled jointly by the government, by trade associations representing manufacturers, and by representatives of organized consumers. Many intermediate consumers are already organized—such as the great public utilities, railways, telephone and telegraph companies, central power stations. The ultimate consumer must also have his delegates. Strict impartiality and legality may thus be maintained by a tripartite control—the government, the producer, the consumer.

In respect to organizing demand from ultimate consumers, we have some dawning ideas, but at this time and place we prefer to end on the note of challenge. If the poor boobs—of whom we have the honor to be two—haven't the sense and intelligence to devise ways and means, and take a few billions which are theirs for the asking, there is nothing for it but they must stew in their own juice. They will deserve to be taken in by every cymbal-clanging salesman from here to Jericho.

STUART CHASE AND F. J. SCHLINK.

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Great Britain and the Communists

THE conviction of twelve British communists for conspiracy to publish seditious libels and for incitement of the army and the navy to mutiny is the first considerable political trial in this country for many years. It is important that it should be understood in its proper perspective since it affords a useful clue to the present temper of English politics.

Ever since the Baldwin government came into office, the Home Secretary, Sir William Joynson-Hicks, has been fulminating against the Communist party as a gigantic conspiracy which is shattering the foundations of the British Empire. He has been passionately supported by the Yellow Press and the semi-official Tory organ, The Morning Post. Hardly a day has passed without some effort on his part to insist that unless action is taken against Communists the future of England is in jeopardy. Possibly on his inspiration, the annual conference of the Conservative party at Brighton last October demanded action against them. Americans will understand the nature of his speeches if I say that they were couched in much the same terms as those of Attorney-General Palmer during the "Red Hysteria." They displayed also the same ignorance of communism and entire lack of a sense of proportion.

Upon a number of documents submitted to the Attorney-General, the latter was induced to indict twelve of the most important Communists in England. They were tried before Mr. Justice Swift. Five of them were sentenced to twelve months', and seven to six months' imprisonment. The jury were only absent twenty minutes from the box, so that they were probably fairly settled in their own minds when they left it.

They had, I think, a perfectly fair trial. The Attorney-General, who led for the prosecution, could not have put his case more moderately. Their own counsel were treated fairly both by the judge and the Attorney-General. Those of the defendants who chose to conduct their own defense were, in my own view, given far more latitude by the judge than was the case in the American Communist trials. The judge's summing-up was, I thought, eminently fair and judicial. He might, perhaps, have omitted his comment on the defendant's refusal to go into the witness-box; but, in strict law, he was, of course, entitled to make that comment. Some of the prisoners defended themselves with great ability, and they were certainly listened to with close attention by the jury. And, since they represented themselves as men who did not desire to take one step towards preparing for the civil war they proclaimed as inevitable, the actual trial itself is, I believe, one to which no radical could possibly take objection.

But the English law of sedition and incitement to mutiny is not safeguarded by a free speech amendment into which men like Justice Holmes can read reasonable safeguards. It does not call for acts. It does not demand a danger of immediate disorder inherent in the words used. It does not, in the case of mutiny, ask for evidence that a single soldier or sailor has ever seen the incitement addressed to them. It simply asks that when words are construed by the jury to contain an appeal to violence, or class-hatred, or bringing the King's government into contempt, the offence alleged shall be regarded as proved. On the law as it stands in England I may quote the remarks of two great English lawyers. "The legal definition of sedition," wrote Professor Dicey, "might easily be used to check a great deal of what is ordinarily considered allowable discussion, and would, if rigidly enforced, be inconsistent with the prevailing forms of political agitation." "Where factions are unequally balanced," wrote Lord Cockburn, "and the times violent, there is no department of criminal justice where such extensive unfairness may plausibly be practiced under the forms of law."

It is important to remember the nature of the evidence upon which the defendants were convicted. Almost entirely, it consisted of extracts from Russian government documents—theses of the Third International, Addresses to the Young Communist International, and so forth. Two of the seditious passages were appeals in the Workers' Weekly—the communist paper—to soldiers not to shoot down their fellow-workers, but to turn their guns upon their oppressors. All these documents were freely sold to any purchaser at the Communist Bookshop. Some of them were four and five years old. No evidence was produced to show (1) that a single soldier or sailor had been influenced by them; (2) that the defendants had taken any steps to give effect to their teaching. But granted the law of sedition in England, their guilt is, I think, unquestionable. And granted the fact that, for the last twelve months, every member of the jury had been living in an atmosphere created by the fiery jeremiads of the Home Secretary who even, just after the arrests had been made, went out of his way to announce them gleefully at an amateur dramatic performance, it is clear that their conviction was as inevitable as any human thing could be.

II

But was it wise? Ought, in other words, the prosecution to have been undertaken? I append some reasons why Englishmen who care for freedom, men like Mr. C. P. Scott, Prof. L. T. Hobhouse, Mr. Shaw and Mr. Wells—I take names unassociated with politics—do not think it should.

(1). The Communist movement, on the confession of its own leaders, is a dwindling movement. They put its membership at 4,000; and the recent decisions of the Labor party made their further decline inevitable. Persecution will have the inevitable effect of increasing the party's prestige and

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importance. (2). It is always inadvisable to prosecute mere opinion. No one would have defended the Communists for attempting definite acts; but not even the most urgent efforts of the secret police could discover documents of other than abstract and philosophic nature. To punish for these is to go back to the worst trials of the Napoleonic epoch. (3). The prosecution comes badly from a government some of whose members would have been found guilty of far worse offences in the Ulster controversy of 1913. For men like Sir Austen Chamberlain and Lord Birkenhead to accuse others of sedition is farcical. (4). The prosecution is political and not judicial. It follows upon a year's campaign by the Home Secretary (himself a seditionist of the Ulster period) and a specific demand for exactly this action from the Unionist party. (5). It is always impossible to define sedition, and the only result of putting communism in that category has been to make thousands acquainted with its teaching who never before were even interested in it.

There is another side to this prosecution to which I refer with regret. Most of us in England, even of the Left, have taken some pride in the impartial administration of British justice. We cannot take that pride now. The Home Secretary is referred to by the Manchester Guardian as the "Secretary for Class War." Certainly since he came into office, the police, who are under his control, have winked at illegal drilling by Fascists all over the country. A charge made against three Fascists who attacked the lame driver of a Daily Herald van was withdrawn without any proper charge being substituted in its place; though everyone agrees that this would not have happened had the van belonged to the Morning Post. It is difficult to believe that a Home Secretary who has *to give orders* to the police that justice shall be administered impartially—this after the arrest of the Communists has caused great indignation—has done other than infect the law with the belief that Communist illegality has to be smashed while Tory illegality may be condoned. When the Fascists who attacked the Herald's van were released, the Tory magistrate who bound them over actually urged them to join the special police volunteers.

All this must be read in the context of the Home Secretary's announcement of plans for saving the country from strikes; of his zealous patronage of a private organization, sponsored by well-known Tories and retired soldiers and sailors, for supplying recruits to the government in the event of strikes; and of an administration by him of the Aliens' Act which members on his own side declare to be deliberately anti-Semitic in temper.

III

When the House of Commons debated the issue on a vote of censure proposed by Mr. MacDonald, that vote was rejected by 127 to 351. Only two liberal members voted with the Labor party; two voted against it; the rest abstained. The debate was remarkable not so much for the criticism of government action by the Labor party—I thought Sir John Simon, who did not vote, made by far the best attack on the government—but because of the explanation of their attitude given by Tory members. This reveals the simple fact that the grounds upon which freedom of speech is attacked never vary; and it is always denied that the attack is upon freedom of speech.

Let me summarize a few of the more salient remarks. The Home Secretary's sublimely simple view was that he was opposing not freedom of speech but sedition; to which, perhaps, Bagehot's remark that no man knows what sedition is but all know it is a vague word which may be turned to the use of the government of the day, is a sufficient response. A Tory lawyer took the view that not liberty was attacked but license; a distinction which the curious will find neatly punctured in Bentham's Book of Fallacies. Sir John Marriott was in favor of prosecution because not even a cat could safely be exposed to the seductions of Communist propaganda. Major Stanley explained that freedom does not mean license, that is, that he did not agree with communism. Another member said that the Communists would have been more severely treated in Russia. The Attorney-General wound up the debate by explaining that since the documents involved were clearly seditious no question of freedom of speech arose.

IV

Professor Hobhouse, whose wise insight into English politics seems to me unsurpassed, said to me recently that he had detected in recent years a decline in the British respect for freedom. I believe that is true, though it is difficult to measure how far it is true. Certainly men like Sir W. Joynson-Hicks are educating their supporters into a belief in class-justice, class-liberty, and class-force. They are persuading large numbers of the working-class that what Mr. Gladstone once termed the "resources of civilisation" are exhausted. Nothing is worse for a country than to magnify petty sedition into public danger. Nothing except severe risk of disorder justifies the punishment of declamation that you know is unlikely to be effective. That is what the government has done; and it has done it without pretense of equality in application.

It would be untrue for me to say that this prosecution has been unpopular. I believe, indeed, that the man in the street tends to approve of it. That is the significance of the remark of Professor Hobhouse I quoted above. I do not need to insist in the New Republic on the vital import of freedom of speech. But I do need to remark that the effect of this prosecution upon English politics will have consequences far wider and more profound than those who brought it are now able to imagine.

London. HAROLD J. LASKI.

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Who Started the War?

New Light from Chancellor Marx

THE January number of Foreign Affairs contains a remarkable article on The Responsibility for the War, by ex-Chancellor Marx. No historian in any country has presented a more effective and compact statement of Germany's point of view. It is based on a careful use of the most recent and reliable documents. It is more objective, scholarly, and convincing, but less rhetorical, than ex-President Poincaré's article in the preceding number of Foreign Affairs, to which it does not allude, but to which it is obviously intended to be a reply.

Marx rightly points out that by 1910 Europe had become divided into two groups of Powers—the Triple Alliance and the Triple Entente. Which was the stronger? Undoubtedly the Triple Entente. This was owing to Italy's virtual desertion from the Triple Alliance by her secret agreements with France and Russia, and to the far greater military forces, naval forces, natural resources, and manpower controlled by the Triple Entente. Though Marx does not mention the fact, it is significant that Lord Grey in his recent memoirs (volume II, page 68) states that "both British and French military opinion of the highest order hitherto [before 1914] held that the French Army and the British Expeditionary Force would together be able to resist successfully a German attack, *even if France and Britain were alone and unsupported by Russia*" (italics ours). One of the highest French military experts and General Staff officers, Buat, has left it on record that the peace strength of the French army in 1914 was slightly above that of Germany. The myth of a greatly superior German force deliberately choosing to fall upon an unsuspecting and unprepared France is no longer tenable. As Marx correctly says, "The Entente was so much stronger than the Central Powers that an aggressive scheme on the part of Germany and Austria was almost suicidal."

Which of the two groups, Triple Alliance or Triple Entente, pursued aggressive aims which could not be achieved except by a general European war? Russia and France, replies Marx. From the new collection of Izvolski correspondence edited and summarized by Stieve, Marx shows clearly how Russia, foiled in the East by Japan, turned again under Izvolski to the Balkans to realize her historic "mission." France at first held back. Even M. Poincaré at first sought to put brakes on the Russian steamroller. But in the summer of 1912 he began to change. He extended the Franco-Russian Alliance by a naval convention with Russia. He pressed Russia to construct strategic railways against the German frontier. He made a naval understanding with England whereby, in the event of war, Great Britain was morally obligated to protect the north coast of France from which French vessels were withdrawn to replace British vessels in the Mediterranean.

After the victories of Russia's Balkan satellites in the fall of 1912, resulting in a further shift of power in favor of the Triple Entente, M. Poincaré changed completely. He declared to Izvolski, according to the latter's telegram of November 17, 1912, "It is for Russia to take the initiative in an affair [the support of Serbia] in which she is the most interested party. It is the task of France to give her effective support . . . Broadly speaking, added M. Poincaré, it all comes to this: if Russia makes war, France also will make war." From this and other evidence Marx correctly concludes that Poincaré gave Russia a blank check in regard to her Balkan schemes even if they meant a world war. He quotes further telegrams to show how in 1913 Delcassé, who went as French ambassador to St. Petersburg in 1913 after Georges Louis had been dismissed in accordance with Russian desires, even discussed with the Russian foreign minister the division of the spoils which would follow upon war against Germany and Austria. On his visit to Russia in July, 1914, after the Sarajevo assassination but before the publication of the Austrian ultimatum, President Poincaré again confirmed his blank check to Russia. This encouraged the Tsar's officials to take mobilization measures which menaced Germany as well as Austria and virtually made war inevitable.

Two kinds of criticism may be made upon ex-Chancellor Marx's article, neither of which, however, materially affects the correctness of his statements. One is that he centres his attention upon the Entente. He says almost nothing of German actions and blunders which undoubtedly caused Entente statesmen to think of a war as "inevitable," and thereby contributed to secret treaties and understandings which in turn tended to make it inevitable. It is only when one keeps in mind the actions of both Triple Alliance and Triple Entente Powers that one can strike a just balance in regard to responsibility for the War. Until very recently most Entente writers, blinded by war propaganda and prejudice, have suffered from this myopia which allowed them to see nothing except what Germany and Austria were doing. It is well that writers like Marx, Montgelas, Ewart, Fabre-Luce and others should extend our vision and redress the balance.

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We are still too apt to accept the old myths. For instance, an editorial in the New York Times of December 14, commenting on Marx's article, indicates that it was Germany's fault—German sabre-rattling—which changed the situation for the worse in the two years before the War. It implies that the French army law introducing the three-year service, "passed by the Chamber of Deputies on July 9, 1913," was in consequence of, and in reply to, "the fact that in March, 1913, the Bundesrat approved a bill, adopted in the Reichstag on May 1, raising the peace effectives of the German Army from 544,000 men to somewhere between 835,000 and 875,000 men." In reality the new French Army Law was announced in the Temps of February 17, 1913, discussed by Izvolski in a despatch of February 27, and laid before the Chamber of Deputies on March 10—eighteen days before the German law was laid before the Reichstag on March 28. In both countries there were some newspaper guesses concerning new military laws prior to these dates, but it is almost certain that neither was the French military increase caused by the German, nor vice versa. In both countries the increase of armaments originated with the increasing suspicion and political tension growing out of the Balkan crisis. This crisis arose from the Balkan League which had been formed under the patronage and with the active assistance of Russia. Russia's secret activity in bringing about this Balkan League is now clear from the despatches of Hartwig and Nekludov, the Russian Ministers in Belgrade and Sofia, which have recently been published in the Bolshevist historical journal, Krasnyi Arkhiv. Incidentally it may be noted that the figures of the increase of the German army given in the editorial are exaggerated; the increase of the effectives amounted to about 120,000 men, half of whom were to be called to the colors in October, 1913, but the other half not until October, 1914.

The other criticisms of Marx's article relate to a few points so insignificant that it may seem pedantic to mention them. The general reader is invited to skip them. Yet for the sake of historical precision, by which alone the nations can reach the common ground of solid fact, scholars may be glad to note them.

On page 183 Marx quotes from a secret treaty "concluded" between Russia and Bulgaria in 1909. Such a treaty was certainly "discussed," but there is no clear evidence that it was signed and "concluded."

On page 187 Marx gives two reasons why Russia did not resort to arms during the Balkan Wars: first, because her own armaments were not yet adequate; and, second, because "Austria-Hungary, with the exercise of the greatest self-restraint, avoided every imprudent measure which might jeopardize peace." The first reason is certainly correct; as to the second, we should say it was rather that none of the other countries at that time wanted a European conflict, and so all, especially Germany and England coöperated in the London Conference to avert war.

On page 191 Marx says, "In the year 1914 the ring of fire was closed around the Central Empires by the conclusion of a Naval Convention between Great Britain and Russia." Such a naval convention was not "concluded" but merely discussed. Doubtless it would have been "concluded" within a few days had not a "leak" occurred. This caused Sir Edward Grey to deny in Parliament the existence of the rumored convention and temporarily to suspend the discussions. As the Russian ambassador in London neatly expressed it in his telegram of July 2, Grey "finds it difficult to issue a denial and at the same time to go on negotiating."

Footnote 20, by a misprint reads, "Stieve: Iswolski im Weltkreig" (sic), when it should read, "Stieve, Iswolski und der Weltkrieg." The first work is Stieve's summary of the Izvolski correspondence from 1911 to 1914, the second Stieve's edition of Izvolski's despatches between 1914 and 1917. Whether Stieve gives correctly the quotation to which Marx here refers cannot be known with certainty until we have Headlam-Morley's complete edition of the British Blue Book of 1914 which is announced to appear within a few weeks.

Marx closes his article with a just plea for moral as well as military disarmament. "But this military disarmament will only become possible when moral disarmament has made sufficient headway, above all only when the moral condemnation of Versailles has been cancelled . . . To this end a knowledge of the truth must be spread among mankind; and a fight for the truth concerning the past is therefore a fight for the future happiness of humanity."

SIDNEY B. FAY.

The Tree of Night

O tree of darkness, sprung from earth,
What sorrow watered you to birth?

What moon shall penetrate your pall
Of lively shade, or what spade shall
The unsubstantial root up-plough,
What blade hew down the airy bough?

Stern nothingness, who bloom above us,
How you do threaten us and move us!

Though spring obscure you in its hour
While your white stars remotely flower,
And that gold bird, the sun, flies under,
And you are quick with wind and thunder,

Yet we are fearful out of reason
For your more black and bitter season
Which brings such pleasant things to doom;

A time, I think, when no stars bloom
In the intolerable gloom.

GEORGE H. DILLON.

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The Dybbuk

The Dybbuk, by S. Ansky. Translated by Henry Alberg. The Neighborhood Playhouse. December 15, 1925.

IN Yiddish and in popular theatres, through which it has spread over the world since 1913, the year it was written, The Dybbuk is a sort of mystical, romantic melodrama, set in a Jewish atmosphere and made up of seen and unseen forces, of the quick and the dead acting together. A young man and a young girl have been promised to one another by their parents at birth. But the girl's father, grown rich, wants a finer match for his daughter and does not keep his promise. The young man enters the synagogue and is famous for his learned genius, the girl is betrothed elsewhere. Through his pain, his meditation, his fasting, his ecstasy and his passion, he sees through the veil of the known, and falls dead. The wedding day arrives, but the soul of her dead lover enters into the girl's body. The third act concerns the exorcism by the rabbi; the dybbuk by means of the last and extreme measures is forced to part from her body. She is left alone. The voice of her lover, separated now from her, calls. She goes to him through death.

To a Gentile or to a Jew who is not orthodox such a version, popular and Yiddish, of The Dybbuk would be a play unequal in its hold on the attention, turning on a powerful and touching love theme, and full of atmosphere, legend, ritual and tradition more or less strange and variably interesting. To an orthodox Jew, and especially one with the Old World racial culture close to him, it would be crowded with especial meaning, with rich allusions, pathetic, deep tenderness, fanatical devotion, familiar details of the Chassidic sect, infinite elements that no outsider would understand or even suspect. In either case it would not be distinguished drama.

But the production of The Dybbuk that we see at the Neighborhood Playhouse is not Yiddish and popular. They have gone to the Hebrew instead or to the Yiddish, to a purer and more austere classical source; they have availed themselves of Mr. David Vardi, whose Russian connection with the play amounts to virtual creation. He and Miss Lewisohn have worked into the production of The Dybbuk meanings and shadings that no words of the dramatist could express, but that depend on imaginative collaboration and direction as the rehearsals proceed. The play is pushed farther back into its origins. It is no longer mere folk theatre, no longer realism of a homely intensity and familiar human nature. It draws now from regions that are far from us, whether they are in our own East Side or in Russian communities or Poland or ages ago. It sugests singleness and strength, tribal life in some village on the Arabian desert's edge. You have the feeling of two periods of time at once, or of time's not existing; you seem to see a myth being born in the first age of a primitive tribe and at the same moment alive and common today.

Miss Aline Bernstein's setting for the first act, the room in the synagogue, is dramatic and right, full of austere and subtle feeling. Sender's house, in the second act, is good; the last setting is too thin and is badly lighted. The sight of so many young actors, seen lately in rowdy and comical characters, taking now rôles of old men, made up admirably and playing with so much sincerity and artistic conscience, is a fine thing in our theatre. To Mr. Albert Carroll went the superb part of the student, the girl's lover whose soul afterward takes possession of her body. Mr. Carroll has the right technical lay-out for his performance but lacks as yet the powerful obsession and intensity that would make it take its just place in the dramatic motivation. Mr. Ian MacLaren as the Messenger, the figure that moves in the two worlds of fact and spirit and has the gift of prophecy, spoke his lines with dramatic significance; but for the abstraction and spiritual presence of the rôle his movement on the stage and lack of rapport with the excellent ensemble around him were unfortunate. Miss Dorothy Sands gives an admirable performance of Frade, the motherless girl's foster mother. In the last scene especially Miss Sands expresses beautifully the old woman's tender, wise shyness in the presence of youth's suffering and conveys to us the sense of a protecting love as old as the history of women.

Miss Mary Ellis, who sang all last season with such success in Rose Marie, plays the part of the heroine. The less compelling side of her performance is in the scene where the dybbuk speaks from the girl's body. The actress there could have more tragic force than Miss Ellis has yet achieved, more of the torture that not even death has been able to take away. But Miss Ellis has always beautiful feeling, beautiful movement, and a beautiful tone and timing that happily relate to her musical gifts. Her first scene and the wedding scene exhibit a wonderful quality indeed. The moment at the second curtain when the dybbuk's spirit has taken her body and the girl bursts into her lover's voice and song has immense tragic emotion.

In The Dybbuk Ansky has fused many elements together. Vast learning in Jewish tradition; the intention of widening the old sacred conception into a universal brotherhood of man; the reminder to his race of their past and deep sense of God; the representation of a primitive belief in innumerable spirits around us, coexistent with our lives and operant in them, as parallel with modern thought, and the statement of this in terms of modern realism; these are some aspects of his achievement. To a Jew The Dybbuk, the play itself in this version of it and this devoted production at the Neighborhood Playhouse, would be, I should think, a source of burning racial memory, of pride in a tradition that traces from so remote a past and shows so vivid and continuous a history through centuries. I have not this Jewish prejudice in favor of The Dybbuk and this full understanding of it. My own experience is that my distance from the mind and habit of a good deal of the material left me not always interested in the scenes. But from much of it I carry away an unforgettable excitement.

What I find so stirring and such a great poetic impulse in The Dybbuk is, for one thing, its bare and poignant merging of the seen and unseen worlds. I have the sense of the old experience of the human race stored in us and become a part of the body's biology, the shadows and terror and solace of the natural earth, the dead moving around and in us. I have the sense of symbols and rites that arose in primitive living and that are eternally expressive of our human life. I like this projection of ferocity, fanaticism,

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tenderness, rapture, and of this seething life that is presented to us so free of material fact and yet so realistic. I like this display of a life that is so intense, so full of elevation, of squalor, of ugliness and of an overwhelming continuity of religious passion. And, most of all, the main dramatic theme of The Dybbuk is both a great folk myth and a terrific poetic image: the idea of a love so strong that after death it can drive itself into another body.

STARK YOUNG.

Lysistrata

WHEN the Moscow Art Theatre first came to New York three seasons ago, their Russian comedies proved to be the least popular productions of their repertoire. There is something harsh in Russian humor which we westerns find unsympathetic. Compare the long serious plays of Chekhov, which we appreciate readily, with his ferocious one-act farces, which make us shudder. Something of this same disturbing harshness appears in the comedy of Greece: what fascinates us in the Greeks and what makes their literature so different, not only from our own but even from that of Rome, which is already comparatively respectable, middle-class and modern, is the combination of a high culture with a closeness to primitive conditions. The comedies of Aristophanes were performed at Dionysiac festivals which a producer of modern French farces would consider exceedingly obscene; and their mockery was edged with a cruelty which the audience of a modern German satirist would find bitter rather than gay. Yet Aristophanes is as far from bitterness as he is from obscenity, as we understand those qualities today. He rises from both lightly and without stay into the lyric exhilaration of almost Shelleyan heavens; or into that other exhilaration, the delight of the intelligence, which makes his denunciations of war and of democratic demagoguery among the most infectious in literature. It is characteristic of him, as distinguished from a modern comic writer of the same sort, from a Bernard Shaw, for example, or even an Anatole France, that we feel in him no opposition between the highest exercises of the mind and the crudities of the natural man.

For this reason, the Russians, who have been closer to the earth and further from industrialized modern Europe than perhaps any other European people, at the same time that they have flowered in the theatre in the completest and most finished art of our time, prove to be particularly happy performers of Aristophanes. The Irish Players, at the time when they were doing The Playboy of the Western World, might have had some such success with Lysistrata. But, as one watches the production by the Musical Studio of the Moscow Art Theatre, one wonders who else could have supplied such a combination of efficiency and intelligence with natural directness, vitality and animal spirits, of artistic seriousness with boldness in the farcical and grotesque. I have never seen a Greek play brought so vigorously to life on the stage: while it lasts, the Peloponnesian War, the civic life of Athens, are absolute realities; and at the same time vividly alien with the strangeness which we feel in foreign times and peoples. Some part of this strangeness is no doubt due to the fact that it is not merely the Greeks but the Russians who are foreign to America; so that the "papapapaxes!" and the "alalas!" sound more convincing in the mouths of the Art Theatre than they would in those of familiar members of the Actors' Equity. But those who saw the Russian productions of An Enemy of the People and Goldoni's Locandiera, with their sharp and complete differentiation between eighteenth century Italy and modern provincial Norway, will recognize in the Lysistrata the care which has been taken by the producers, not merely to achieve an accuracy of archæological detail, but, working with material derived from study, to produce a color, a movement and a tone appropriate to Aristophanes.

The scenery and action are conventionalized, but in such a way as to throw the reality of the play into salience and to give freer scope to its life. Only in the case of the grotto of Pan, where Lysistrata's husband tries to win her back, which, as we see it, appears merely a compartment in an open scaffolding, do we perhaps feel that the proper balance between convention and realism has not been preserved. The Acropolis is represented by three groups of tapering, white, fluted columns, supporting broken arcs, of which the middle one stands highest and is approached by a winding flight of steps. On these stairs, the Athenian women, with their brown legs and earth-red mantles, are outlined sharply, as if in clear air, against the deep bright blue sky of Greece. Everything that women ordinarily are in the choruses of Greek tragedies, as we usually see them produced, these Russian women are not; as they are contrasted with the chorus of old men headed by the City Magistrate, who have come to dislodge them from the citadel, they are an embodiment of robust female strength and natural energy such as we see sometimes in the European countryside, but more rarely in large modern cities, and almost never in New York: they are precisely what the Greeks called them, "citizenesses." Not even in their Corybantic moments of cymbal-clashing and dancing, are we reminded of the stage. The old men are caricatured, but in an unfamiliar fashion: they have thin fishbone-like noses, high, chirruping effeminate voices and helmets which suggest at once decrepitude and obsolescence. The women pour water on them from large earthenware jars and finally put them to rout in a hand-to-hand contest. Lysistrata, superbly played by Mme. Belyakova, is seen, at the rise of the curtain, alone on the highest platform of the stairway, and thereafter dominates the scene. With her splendid stature, her deliberate step and her long greenish-gray robe, she has the dignity, the magistral presence, of an heroic figure of tragedy or even of a goddess. But her rich brassy hair is stained with the color of the earth again; and she talks to the women, not as a preceptor, not like a Princess Ida, but as a woman to women. She has, like them, the vigor of the common life to animate the wisdom of her project. And it is this flavor and vitality of a healthy and weather-seasoned race that our translations, our imitations and our theatrical productions most often lose in the Greeks. It is these recruits from the barbarous steppes who have been able to supply it. Among the crowd of Athenian women as we see them in the Russian Lysistrata, we might imagine, if the action of the play had taken place a little earlier, the green-grocer who bore Euripides and the midwife who was Socrates's mother.

EDMUND WILSON.

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Washington Notes

BEFORE these foreign debt funding settlements over which there has been so much silly stuff written and said are finally through the Senate, unless I am misinformed a considerable number of pointed and pungent things will be said not at all in line with the oleaginous editorials of the loyal Republican press. The extreme smugness with which the Coolidge administration has assumed that its handling of these debts was the very last word in statesmanship and that the American Debt Funding Commission has been both wise and patriotic, will, I believe, be severely jarred before ratification is secured. Personally I think they did pretty well, but my opinion does not count. Several Senators besides the sardonic Reed of Missouri are more or less eager to express themselves concerning the way the debts have been handled, taking the broad general ground that while the Commission has been a number of things, wise and patriotic are not among them. They propose to give Senator Smoot, who since the Italian settlement in which he had a hand has been literally bursting with self-satisfaction, as unhappy a time as they can.

One of the main administration arguments supporting the agreements is that the terms fixed represent the full capacity to pay of our debtors. In this connection it will be pointed out that the total combined amount which all the debtors with whom we have so far completed negotiations have agreed to pay us in 1927 is $220,000,000. Yet under the Dawes plan, Germany is obligated to pay $600,000,000 in that year. It will be inquired why the "capacity to pay" of Germany should be nearly three times as great as that of all of our debtors, including Great Britain. It will be asked whether the same yardstick was used in measuring German capacity as in measuring the capacity of the others. If so, what makes the difference? In view of the fact that Germany lost as a result of the war no little of her industrial and mineral wealth and that France made corresponding gains, the answer to that question is of particular interest. Just what the answer is I do not know, but I do know the question will be insistently asked.

The roaring and rabid wets in and out of Congress, editorial and oratorical, have got themselves pretty well convinced that before the session is over they will have succeeded in breaking through the prohibition guard and modifying the Volstead Act. In House and Senate wet leaders are belligerent and determined and the organized wet forces in the various big cities are full of hope that at last the drys are on the run and the break has come.

It is amazing how completely astray the judgment of the men actively engaged on one side or the other in this liquor struggle can be. It always has been that way. There seems to be something about the wet and dry fight that unbalances the sense of proportion of those who enthusiastically engage in it. Curiously enough, too, the wet leaders seem in the matter of politics to be less well posted and less practical than the other side. The fact is that there is no more chance of wet legislation of any sort at this session than there was at the last. Not only will the Volstead Act not be modified and not only will the multitudinous wet bills and resolutions introduced at both ends of the capitol not get out of the respective committees to which they have been referred, but the various dry bills behind which Mr. Wayne Wheeler and his forces are lined up—or at least most of them—will be enacted. Of the 435 members of the present House 325 are dry—so far as their votes are concerned—and 110 wet. In the Senate the division is 68 drys and 28 wets. That is the way they divide and the calmer wets know it. The mouthy ones do not, but they will before long. The Anti-Saloon League is just as strong in this Congress as it was in the last and the idea that it has lost its grip is not well founded.

This does not mean, however, that the situation so far as prohibition is concerned is the same this session as last. Nor does it mean that because their voting strength at this session has not diminished the dry leaders are happy. The reverse is true. A break does seem to have come so far as sentiment is concerned and the most practical and far-sighted politicians in Washington are convinced there will be many more wets than drys in the next Congress. There is no question but that in the 1926 Congressional elections the wet forces will be far more aggressive and confident than they have been since the Eighteenth Amendment was adopted, and the issue will be more to the fore in the campaign. The impression that prohibition has failed has undoubtedly been strengthened by a series of happenings in the past six months. The apparently growing impossibility of enforcing the law is unquestionably seriously disturbing to large numbers of sincere prohibitionists throughout the country who look with real yearning toward the rise of some sort of constructive leadership to get them out of the present mess. Dry leaders here in Washington, in their candid moments, will admit this is so and admit further that the elections of next year are not bright with promise for their side.

The real fight over the Volstead law will come in the next Congress, not in this. No man is wise enough today to foresee the outcome then, but it does seem certain that a change of some kind is indicated. The present intolerable condition, as unsatisfactory to the drys as to the wets, cannot last and everybody knows it.

Honestly when the doglike devotion to Mr. Coolidge of the Hearst chain of newspapers, largely through the instrumentality of Brother Brisbane, is calmly considered it constitutes one of the most curious cases of journalistic support on record. Nor is it without its amusing phase. Leaving entirely aside the character of the Hearst press in the years gone by and the extraordinary contrast between their politics then and now, the most striking thing about the present praise with which they almost daily drench the President is that it is in spite of the pet Hearst-Brisbane policies, not because of them. For instance, the one man whom they have supported with the utmost vigor and enthusiasm in the past year is Colonel Mitchell. They have done their best to make a hero of the Colonel. They have made him out a sort of superman and unsparingly condemned all those who did not believe in him and his air service views—that is, all except Mr. Coolidge, who did not believe in either one. When it came to Mr. Coolidge the Hearst papers had no word of reproach, no whis-

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per of condemnation. On the contrary they expressed the belief that in his wise, silent way he would get at the truth and rebuke the besotted General Staff and the blind bureau chiefs. It is the same way on the World Court, which the Hearst press has rabidly opposed. Mr. Coolidge, for reasons of political expediency rather from any inner zeal it is true, is for the Court and anxious to put it through. The Hearst papers rave at all those who favor the Court—that is, all except Mr. Coolidge. Him they continue to praise, expressing the conviction that in his wisdom he will not permit this country to join the Court, disregarding completely the fact that in his feeble way he is doing all he can to push us in.

If the readers of daily newspapers — particularly the Hearst papers—had greater powers of discrimination they could not help but see the curious inconsistency and utter lack of logic in the overwhelming support given by the Hearst papers to the man who is more effectively opposed to their pet policies than anyone else. But then, if newspaper readers had real powers of discrimination they would be reading something else. Anyhow it must be conceded that when Mr. Hearst and Mr. Brisbane start out to build a man up they make a thorough job of it. They let nothing interfere with the work—not even their own policies. The great mystery is, Why? I have heard a number of guesses, some exceedingly plausible and supported by fairly good logic. It would be interesting to know from the start the how, the why and the wherefore —not that it is important, but it would be interesting. To me not the least amusing thing about the whole business is the unostentatious way in which Mr. Coolidge from time to time shows his appreciation of the Hearst support —not by adopting Hearst ideas or policies, but in other little and quite effective ways. I think I said before and I repeat now that Mr. Brisbane carries more weight with Mr. Coolidge than all of the other Washington newspaper people combined. One reason is he weighs more.

By the time this is printed Congress will just about be reconvened after the Christmas holidays. The World Court debate in the Senate will continue along its bitter way and no one expects the final showdown much before the end of February. There is a report, which may or may not be well based, that the Borah-Reed-Johnson-Norris group propose to compel the administration forces to agree to postponement of the vote in order to get their debt agreements ratified and the tax reduction bill passed. It is sound enough strategy for the irreconcilables if they can get away with it, but to get away with it it seems to me the other side, so enormously in the majority, must be almost incredibly inept and inefficient. Of course if the fight for the Court were in the hands of someone other than Senator Lenroot I would have more confidence that such a game could not be put over. The Senior Senator from Wisconsin, however, is not noted for the swiftness with which he functions as a legislative leader. He is a little slow on the trigger. Of the ultimate adoption of the World Court proposal this time I have no real doubt now. I confess I did some time back, but the pressure from various sources has stiffened up Mr. Coolidge, and his message as well as his platform have put him in a position where he has to go through. With thirty-five or more Democratic votes solidly for the Court, it is almost impossible to fail. At least so it would seem . . . and then one remembers the extraordinary futility of the last session —and wonders.

Washington. T. R. B.

Twenty Days Hath September

AT about this time every year people come together for the purpose of simplifying the calendar.

Last year the suggestion was made that out of the excess days of the present well-known twelve months* there be created an extra month, to be called Liberty. January, February, Liberty, March—that was it. But the suggestion was not renewed this year, undoubtedly owing to a certain Great Magazine, said to be over four million dollars in the hole. Some financially more auspicious name must be found. January, February, Saturday Evening Post, March.

And this year's meeting was not entirely devoid of interest. Hearings were held before the Special Committee on the Simplification of the Calendar of the Merchants' Association. One hundred and thirty-seven plans were submitted. Some of them are notable.

Mr. R. C. Wilhelm of 104 Wall Street wants the year to start when the sun crosses the equinoctial line on March 21. Mr. Moses Cotsworth of the National Fixed Calendar League pleads for thirteen months of twenty-eight days plus one leap day. He has studied the subject for thirty years. It is sad that such long labor should bear such extremely simple fruit.

The happiest suggestion is that of Dr. Theodore de Daragic of 125 East 65th Street: a ten-month year, a six weeks' month, and a six-day week. (Six days shalt thou labor.) This plan leaves five days unaccounted for. They would be reserved as a sort of holiday season at the end of the year. The first of these holidays would be named in honor of the birth of Christ, the second after Columbus, the third in memory of George Stephenson (inventor of the locomotive), the fourth to commemorate Robert Fulton (Steamboat Bob), and the fifth after Henry Ford.

In principle, we accept this plan. It is logical, arithmetically simple, varied, original, dignified and humorous. Nevertheless there are objections. Which two of the twelve months are going to be left out? We nominate February as the month most commonly mispronounced. But since it contains the birthday of George Washington we feel our cause to be hopeless. We will leave it then to a national referendum. Let us transport ourselves to the last sad obsolescent months of 1975. Earlier in the year there were preconvention campaigns, speeches from the rear end of trains, and soundings of public opinion. Gradually the different forces aligned themselves. The South, led by Florida, for reasons best known to itself showed strong enmity against August. The Industrial North was just as violently opposed to January and February, until the

* January, February, March, April, May, June, July, August, September, October, November, December.

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meaning of the Twenty-second was made clear, when the urban population showed a tendency to drop February and compromise on March. The West seethed with revolt, but against what, unless it was the minions of Wall Street, nobody could quite make out. California was unanimously for ousting April, forever associated with that earthquake (or was it a fire?). The two Dakotas particularly villified July, even after the discovery, hidden between the third and fifth, of the Glorious Fourth. Those crazy radical red raving farmers. Compromise candidates were showing their heads long before the two conventions at Miami and Los Angeles respectively. When the great days came the choice had been narrowed down to nine months. At the Pro-Summer convention at Los Angeles, largely controlled by Republicrats, ninety-two ballots were necessary before January was chosen President and April Vice-president. The latter, a dark horse, won over more promising candidates because of his connection with Fool's Day, on which day no American likes to think of himself, or of those he has elected to office. Lexington and Concord is a New England affair only. At Miami, where the delegates were Demoblicans and Pro-Winterites, the losers were August and September, after a bitter fight, ending in the withdrawal of June's name, between prospective brides and the American Federation of Labor. This piece of manipulation, concocted in the back room of a Chicago hotel, caused Labor to turn Pro-Summer. Previously it had always gone Demoblican.

We need not dwell on the vociferous futilities of the campaign itself. Suffice it to say that a million dollars or more was spent by each side, and that the fair names of the tariff and the eight-hour day were most needlessly dragged into the mire of discussion. At midnight of December 31, 1975, in every city and tank town crowds were listening at the radio and before bulletin boards. The returns were coming in. The urban areas were the first to be heard from. "August and September lead," yelled the headlines, "Demoblican Victory Seen." Then the farms and the Main Streets began to roll August back. At three on the morning of January 1, 1976, the last of January ever caught alive in the United States, the tables were reversed. The Republicrats were swamped with congratulatory telegrams. January and April were out of the calendar by five hundred thousand votes. January was dead.

The special Congressional sub-committee appointed to name the five holidays chose Washington, Lincoln, Wilson, Harding and Niagara Falls. There was a minority report, however, in favor of Tom Paine, John Brown, Carrie Nation, William Jennings Bryan and Four Wheel Brakes.

Reverting to stern realities, it is evident that the above plan is too complicated. We offer a simplified substitute of our own. Viz:

The year, if any, is to be divided into two parts. The first part is arranged as follows: An initial month (just for fun) of forty-eight days and an equal number of nights, to be known officially as September and unofficially as Overhead. This month will consist of five weeks of nine days each and three unattached happy holidays designated as Maverick, Moses and Minneapolis, roaming at will through the rest of the month. The first week is to be named Monday, and so on up to and including Friday. The days of the first week are to be named after the nine Muses, the days of the second after the national pastime: Pitcher, Catcher, First Base, etc. The days of the remaining weeks can be named for the seasons, or for famous collars, parlor cars, and oil wells. The last day of the week is always to be called Ultimo. On odd weeks this becomes feminine: Ultima.

The arithmetic of the second part of this new year is masterly. It is divided into twenty-eight months of eleven and nine-elevenths days each. Every sixth day and every twenty-third month must remain unnamed until the following Tuesday. The other days are named after their grandparents.

ROBERT LITTELL.

CORRESPONDENCE

Purpose vs. Evolution

SIR: In his letter to the New Republic entitled Purpose vs. Evolution Mr. Benjamin Lee Whorf attempts to divorce the conduct of man from the physical universe of which he is a part and by which he is surrounded. He visions a static world, manufactured of unit structures, each with fixed properties totally different from the others, discretely piled into a stage setting, inanimate and immobile, upon which an entirely foreign and heterogeneous set of dynamic creatures perform strange evolutions under the direction of an unseen but nevertheless all-seeing, all-wise and purposeful prompter.

He says in effect that the actor is in no way to be bound by the laws which governed the setting of the stage properties and that although the entire physical tendency of a chair is to be a chair, the actor may with perfect impunity follow a perverse direction of the prompter and make the speeches of Romeo on a stage set for What Price Glory. He argues that man is super-physical and must therefore not take his surroundings and the actions of purely physical animals as a basis for his conduct.

So-called dynamic nature consists of mobile, activated creatures composed, as far as we have been able to determine, of purely static substance, that is, chemical elements with fixed characteristics, parts of the inanimate structure of matter, and in no wise differing from the general composition of the universe except in that it possesses a quality we call life.

The chemical composition of the universe is discrete and consists only of a small number of elements. But these in turn are but varying arrangements of electron solar systems and electrons are but moving concentrations of the attractive and active principle we call energy, of which all matter is composed, and other than which nothing in the physical world exists.

If, then, the basis of all matter, whether it be an inert mass or a living being, is a force in violent motion, possessing the faculties of attraction and repulsion, of being dissatisfied with its state and of blindly seeking one which will satisfy that urge, it will be not at all surprising to find that man is constituted of this one thing alone and needs no super-physical law to explain his actions. Man, to be sure, is handicapped in his investigations of himself and nature, for he is equipped with but physical senses and can respond to none but physical stimuli.

If there be forces other than physical, man can never discover them, either in himself or outside of his sphere, for he possesses no instruments with which to record their action. Even in physical investigations of himself he is handicapped by not being able to disassociate his mind from his body. It is impossible to determine motion except in reference to some other body. If a man discovers that the relative space coördinates of himself and another body have changed along a coördinate of time he may be sure that he is relative motion with respect to the object chosen for comparison, but lacking a base of observation, he has no power of determining motion.

Science, even under this handicap, has, however, very nearly determined that all the actions of man are determined by purely physical constants, that his origin is the blind evolution of a cell seeking food in a determining environment and that within him and in sensible form are all the factors which make him what he is.

We must, therefore, I believe, consider man not as manufac-

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tured from special components and then turned over to the mercies of a world governed only by its physical tendencies, of which world his body is a part, and yet possessing a something alien to this world by which his conduct must be guided but must see him as he is, nothing different from the world he lives in, nothing more than an expression of his physical tendencies, bound only by the laws of food and hunger, the attraction and repulsion of positive and negative energies and the blind desire of cells to reproduce their kind.

E. R. LOWREY.

Chicago, Ill.

SIR: In his letter appearing in the December 9 issue of the New Republic, Mr. Benjamin Lee Whorf seems to me to be endeavoring to insert some artificial pieces in the mosaic picture of nature built from facts by science.

He finds in static nature a number of qualities which he declares indicate purpose because they possess qualities resembling manufactured articles. Does it follow then that the rounded roof of a cave shows design because it resembles the Roman arch? Static nature, however, is only an illusion due to our inability to perceive the "dance" of the electrons.

Science has not succeeded in explaining man as anything but a mechanistic contrivance. Mr. Whorf therefore turns to belief where he is unfettered by facts.

JAMES F. PORTER.

New York, N. Y.

Weasel Words

SIR: While they were waiting for the mail stage at the Laplata Civic Centre the other day, they got to talking about one thing and another, and somebody brought up Mr. Speaker Longworth's telling the Alfalfa Club in Washington City that the President is a square peg in a square hole, and what good it might do.

The precinct committeeman said he wished he knew just what Mr. Longworth had in his mind when he said it. They asked old Rozzum Burns what it suggested to him, and he said, nothing special, without it was a shoe peg in a cellar maybe.

HARRISON BROWN.

Laplata, N. M.

A Light Unto the Jew

SIR: No matter how vehemently the Jews may resent Waldo Frank's indictment of their spiritual poverty in America, it must be conceded that in the main his charges are well-grounded. A walk up and down Broadway will strengthen the imputation that the "Jews . . . fashioned their activities upon the rationale of the land's material progress, whose terms are comfort, power, wealth," and that "their way is remote . . . from the way of the prophets and the Jewish martyrs." Mr. Frank, however, blunders most flagrantly when he tells us that the salvation of the Jew in America lies in the Menorah movement. His solution to the problem evinces his failure to gauge the currents and undercurrents that have shaped the life and culture of the Jew in the Diaspora.

Mr. Frank cannot deny that the Jew, during the centuries of his exile, has contributed considerably to the spiritual wealth of the world. Antikolski, Anton Rubinstein, Rachael, Heine, Schnitzler, Georg Brandes—just a few at random—are luminaries of the first magnitude in the realm of creative work. But one may ask is there anything peculiarly national in their creations? Is the figure of Ivan the Terrible, for which Antikolski was awarded the Grand Prix, a Jewish work of art? Is there anything characteristically Jewish in Schnitzler's comedies or dramas? Can anyone detect in Rubinstein's compositions a Jewish strain? Does Georg Brandes devote himself to a study or criticism of Jewish ancient literature? Are Heine's Lieder an inspiration of Jewish lore? Are Rachael's portrayals an interpretation of Jewish life? Do Irving Berlin's songs or Gershwin's compositions contain one plaintive note that is reminiscent of the Jews' recent persecution in Russia? Emphatically, no!

Born and bred in a Christian atmosphere and imbued with a culture foreign to their own, the Jewish artists and men of genius interpret life on terms and in language characteristic of their respective native or adopted countries. Antikolski and Rubinstein give expression to Russian life. Schnitzler depicts a milieu peculiarly Viennese. Heine's poems are saturated with German sentimentalism. Rachael portrays French passions. And Berlin and Gershwin write songs and music that are reflective of the American Jazz Spirit, so excellently symbolized in Howard Lawson's Processional. And herein lies at once the tragedy and weakness of the Jewish artist.

If it were possible for the Jewish artist to divorce himself completely of his antecedents and embrace the culture of his adopted land so as to leave no trace of his origin detectable in his work, it would be "a consummation devoutly to be wished." But fortunately or unfortunately, this is not so. Try as he would, the Jewish artist now and then betrays his origin in the execution of his work. Under the garb of the English Lord he depicts, one will at times discover, an Arbah Kanphos. Underneath the mask of the Christian character he draws, there not unfrequently lurks the Jew. The music he composes occasionally vibrates with the prayer of a persecuted people. The statue he chisels betrays a sorrowful countenance befitting the wandering Jew. Briefly, the Jewish artist is a house divided against himself. Therefore, his is an hybrid art—a bastard art if you will. It has neither the raciness nor the virility of an artist belonging to a nation geographically bound and politically independent.

It is now evident, I believe, why the Jew with an historical background and traditions richer and fuller than that of any other nation has failed to produce an art singular and distinct from that of any other nation. He has no geographical boundaries, no political autonomy. The most rabid assimilators among the Jews have come to this realization and have fastened their hopes on Palestine.

I would like to ask Mr. Frank what the German-American or the Italian-American or the Anglo-American contributed to the spiritual wealth of America as a German, Italian or Britisher? Nothing. These nationalities, caught in the mælstrom of American commercialism have lost their identity. And yet, Germany, Italy and England in their own lands have contributed considerably to culture of the world.

To be sure, art converses in all languages, speaks many tongues. Don Quixote, Iago, Tartuffe are types whose foibles are common to all mankind. But the creation of a Don Quixote was only possible in Spain where chivalry developed and flourished. The creation of an Iago was only possible in England under Elizabeth when the passions of men were unbridled; and the creation of a Tartuffe was only possible in France under Louis XIV when sham and hypocrisy were paraded, tolerated and even rewarded. Universal as these characters appear each represents a separate and distinct culture of a particular nation at a particular time in a particular environment.

If the Jew during his exile has failed to add to the world's storehouse of spiritual wealth, it is because the Jewish poet, artist, musician has no native soil—a native soil from whence sprung a Cervantes, a Shakespeare, a Molière. Native soil! That is the answer to Mr. Frank.

With a history so glorious, with traditions so admirable, with events so tragic behind them it may not be hyperbole to assume that the Jews in their own land and under their own rule bent upon the pursuit and expression of their own ideals will develop a culture as universal and as distinctive as the code of law and ethics they gave to the world more than 3,000 years ago.

WILLIAM J. PERLMAN.

New York, N. Y.

Liberia and Rubber

SIR: In a recent issue of the New Republic, under the heading Liberia and Rubber by Mr. W. E. Burghart DuBois, the author says in conclusion, "On the other hand if the Firestone Plantations Company wishes it can repeat in Liberia all the hell that white imperialism has perpetrated heretofore in Africa and Asia. There is only one power that can in the slightest degree curb this and that is the black American with his vote."

I am a student of American and European history and as such am much interested in the story of white imperialism in the "backward" continents. I mean the true story; not the story told in the "standard" history textbooks. In the light of my studies of such books the above statement is entirely incomprehensible. Might I suggest that Mr. DuBois, or any other person who, in your opinion, is capable of treating the subject of "The Evils of White Imperialism in Asia and Africa" adequately, and will do so honestly and without bias, in a manner comprehensible to the average student; write such a series of articles for your magazine?

DAVID B. HEXTER.

New York, N. Y.

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International Courtesies

Post-War Britain, by André Siegfried. Translated by H. H. Hemming. New York: E. P. Dutton and Company. 314 pages. $3.50.

France and the French, by Sisley Huddleston. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 348 pages. $3.00.

THE English and the French have an inveterate interest in looking at one another across the channel and appraising one another's qualities. Their estimates tend to run in pairs. Thirty years ago a leading book in England was J. E. C. Bodley's France; and almost simultaneously France was profoundly stirred by A Quoi tient la Supériorité des Anglo-Saxons. Similarly in the past year have appeared the two reciprocal studies whose names stand above. It is permissible to believe that both were written with a sense of the present need of a new understanding between the two nations who as allies had secured the hegemony of Europe, but whose policies have tended to diverge under the pressure of economic interests since the peace. M. Siegfried pleads anxiously with his own countrymen for a better understanding of their late allies, whom he presents as a simple, ingenuous, naïve people, irrational and instinctive in behavior, egotistic and self-willed because unconscious of others. But aside from such psychological penetration he has written an authoritative examination of post-war Britain—to quote Mr. Tawney in his review of the book in its original French (New Republic, February 18, 1925) "by far the best study of the economic and political life of England within moderate compass that has appeared for years."

Mr. Huddleston's book is of lighter construction, more discursive and less profound. He begins, as M. Siegfried closes, with certain psychological generalizations of a familiar sort. The French are a people of remarkable varieties of type, from Gascon to Norman, and Breton to Parisian. Nevertheless they possess certain characteristics in common, a sense of reality, trust in reason, thrift even beyond the limit of virtue, a sense of justice, devotion to family. The truth about French men is that they hate militarism and love parades; the truth about French women is that instinct for efficiency in the home is far more characteristic than a much advertised sexual laxity. After this introduction Mr. Huddleston proceeds in a series of surveys to sketch the movements since the war in literature, art and architecture, the theatre, music, science and education. These chapters are too summary in method to be critical, and the judgments which Mr. Huddleston records are mainly catholic. The second division of the book deals with the government of France and particularly with aspects of post-war politics—foreign policy, army and navy, church and state, population, finances, taxation and foreign debts. Here again Mr. Huddleston is clear, informative and interesting.

Mr. Huddleston is far from being a propagandist, but he does not hesitate to take, where possible, a favorable view of the part which France has played in these last stirring years. He quite specifically exempts France from all responsibility for the War. "Neither M. Poincaré the President, nor M. Viviani, the Prime Minister, who were on the high seas when the fatal step was taken, would have deliberately dared to face the consequences of a new struggle with Germany with the recollection of the defeat and humiliation of 1870 in their minds and with no certainty of English or American aid. The odds against France were far too great. As for the French people, they were, as anybody who had any acquaintance with them at that time will concede, altogether pacific in their intentions." Now one of the most interesting and encouraging developments in post-war France has been the intelligent and impartial spirit in which Frenchmen have examined the part of their leaders in bringing on the War. M. Louis and M. Paléologue have revealed the peculiar relations of M. Poincaré with the Russian government in the years, and in the days, before the episode of the high seas. M. Pevet and M. Morhardt have discussed the responsibilities of the War with unsparing candor. Their performance is worthy of a great people. It revives the memory of the France which conquered herself, and in the face of every national temptation of fear and shame did justice to Dreyfus. None of these names appears in Mr. Huddleston's pages. Perhaps he is right in considering that in America at least there would be no understanding of a vision which can read national glory in the hard light of scientific truth.

Mr. Huddleston discusses the post-war policy of France in a more realistic spirit. For example he notes the conscious juggling of the incommensurable ideas of reparation and security. The enormous reparation demands had for France a political purpose. "It was not desired that Germany should acquit herself at once." And he sees further the futility of the very idea of security for France, to which English and American publicists have paid much lip-service. "Security may be described as the philosophers' stone of our age. The search for it is somewhat absurd. It cannot be attained, and most methods that have been adopted to attain it are likely to decrease rather than increase such security as we have." Mr. Huddleston attributes with much plausibility the obsession of the mind of the French people with the incompatible conceptions of reparation and security to the malice and cunning of her statesmen of the Bloc National. "They discovered that everything could be excused on the ground that the search for security is a perfectly legitimate and honorable search instead of being, as many people hold it to be, a craven and silly search." The one formula into which reparation and security could both enter was the economic annexation of the Ruhr and the Rhineland. Such annexation was in Mr. Huddleston's view intended from the first. "There are, indeed, in the Treaty, to be found with a little ingenuity sufficient pretexts for remaining in Rhineland in perpetuity. Doubtless this was intended by M. Clemenceau, M. André Tardieu and Marshal Foch." Accordingly Mr. Huddleston is justified in saying that the "Poincaré experiment had to be made"; and he might plead the same necessity for the system of military alliances negotiated by Mr. Paléologue from the Quay d'Orsay. It was necessary that French statesmen should act according to the logic of the situation which they had created.

In other matters Mr. Huddleston's findings tell heavily against French leadership, particularly in financial policy. Just as French politicians used the lure of "security" to nerve a nation of pacifists to make renewed war on Germany, so they used the alternative illusion of reparations—"Germany will pay"—to cover the panamiste scandal in the restoration of the devastated regions. Of the fundamental wealth of France, Mr. Huddleston has no doubt. "France, in my opinion . . . is not only potentially but actually one of the richest countries in Europe, and it may well be that in a few years they will be the very richest of them all." Yet by way of paradox the French state is nearer bankruptcy than any other in Europe. The reason is made clear in Mr. Huddleston's summary of the budget for 1925:

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Service of public debt.....	19½	milliard francs
Military expenses.....	6	milliard francs
Ordinary running expenses...	8	milliard francs

The chief share of the blame for this mess rests, of course, upon the statesmen of the Bloc National, but other sins are to be laid against those of the Cartel des Gauches. In particular, Mr. Huddleston finds them guilty of raising the old political smoke screen of attack on the church, and thus delaying the assimilation of Alsace-Lorraine.

But Mr. Huddleston is never severe. His sunny temperament makes the best of France, and his eyes avert themselves from half of human fate. In the matter of the foreign debts, he remarks that "France therefore demands in all fairness that the treatment accorded to her should be at least as favorable as that accorded to Germany." He does not ask himself how favorable that treatment actually was in the light of the pre-armistice agreement, the only one which Germany signed of her own free will. He discusses French colonial enterprise with an Olympian aloofness alike from financial and ethical problems. The war for possessions in Tonkin is dismissed as "a ministerial enterprise." There is no word of Syria or Morocco. Instead we have this gem of purest ray serene. "Under the League of Nations Mandates, the rights of the nations are specifically safeguarded, and the countries which accept these mandates must realize their duties to the backward races." To take an instance of Mr. Huddleston's complacency from another field, he speaks frequently of the falling birth rate and the cry of the politicians for more children, with no reference to the figures of infant mortality which show that the French can offset the smaller number of births by taking better care of the babies that are born. As suggested at the beginning, however, Mr. Huddleston is doubtless seeking to promote a more cordial feeling between his own country and France and naturally attenuates facts to this end. With his main thesis that the French people are outrageously misled and misrepresented by their government we are in hearty agreement. We should not quarrel with its application to America. But we think the corollary inescapable that in spite of their realism and trust in reason the French people in politics leave logic to the politicians; that they are in the words which M. Siegfried applies to the British "more 'ingenu' than 'perfide'."

ROBERT MORSS LOVETT.

The Foremost American Puritan

Increase Mather, the Foremost American Puritan, by Kenneth B. Murdock. Cambridge: Harvard University Press. 442 pages. $6.

DR. MURDOCK states that he had a "double purpose" in writing this volume, and that he "tried not only to give a 'life' of Mather" but to retell in some measure "the story of his time in New England" as revealed in his character and activity. It may be noted that "New England" is, perhaps, too inclusive a term for a volume which treats almost exclusively of Massachusetts, save in so far as it illustrates the Puritan spirit, though Mather is an excellent figure to set off some of the aspects of his time.

His life spanned the long and important period from 1639 to 1722. A student first at Harvard he afterward went to Trinity College, Dublin, spent several years in Great Britain, and later established himself in Boston as pastor of the Second Church. He was also president of Harvard, the most noted as well as the most voluminous writer of his day in America, and he represented Massachusetts in the important negotiations with the English government following the loss of the charter. He thus touched the life of his colony on nearly every side, and in his long career had his finger in nearly every pie. There were few public questions or crises in which the noted pastor of the Second Church did not take a prominent and frequently a leading part. The author, by availing himself of all the material hitherto used and some which has not been, has shed new light on many episodes in Mather's active life with the result that we have in this volume not only the best but the only biography of the subject which may be considered complete.

Superlatives are always dangerous but we cannot quarrel perhaps with Dr. Murdock's characterization of his hero as "the foremost American Puritan." It opens, however, speculation as to what constitutes a man the "foremost" figure of his day. That Mather occupied a number of prominent positions, that he attained success in some of them—though opinion may vary as to its degree—that he wielded for many years a powerful influence, that he was ever in the limelight, may all be admitted. The quantity of the man's activities was portentous. How about the quality?

That, of course, raises the question of standards. By what standard should we judge the "foremost" New Englander of the seventeenth century? Obviously, Dr. Murdock is correct in saying that it must be a contemporary one. "We are to gauge his stature by what others did who lived with him and before him; we are to measure his writings by what others produced from the resources that were his; and we are to appraise his character in relation to current influences of training and environment."

Of the average man we can ask no more than that he should not fall below the general level of his day. But of a leader have we not the right to ask that he shall make some advance beyond it? The author, although disclaiming sympathy with Mather's creed and the Puritan mode of life, has made out the best case possible for him. In fact, at times, he has come perilously near special pleading. In the light of this biography, then, let us put Mather to the test. Leaving aside the question of literary craftsmanship and of shrewd practical ability in affairs, did he advance beyond his times in ideas or sympathies? Did he, with all his influence and prestige, lead his generation to a higher plane?

When at the end of Philip's War it was debated what disposition to make of Philip's son, Mather was for selling him into slavery—if we interpret his words in their mildest sense—and the boy was sold in the West Indies. Dr. Murdock says this was not "brutal in seventeenth century eyes." Quite true. Mather did not fall below the level of his time, but he did not advance beyond it. Someone else did, the Reverend John Eliot who pleaded warmly for a humane treatment of the lad, saying that selling souls for money seemed to him "dangerous merchandize." In the matter of persecuting the Quakers we have no direct evidence of Mather's contemporary position but his biographer adopts the point of view that to punish Quakers as they were punished in Boston was considered in the seventeenth century a "necessary defence of the integrity of the state." It *was* in Boston, and if Mather did not see it differently he again did not fall below the general level perhaps. Were there others who rose above it? There

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were, and in Rhode Island the legislature adopted a thoroughly enlightened policy, though, like most defenders of the Massachusetts Puritans, Dr. Murdock does not mention that fact. When we come to the Salem witchcraft frenzy, we again find that Mather was in no way ahead of his age. The best that his biographer can say is that "he was not a radical on the side of what we now see as truth, but an orthodox educated man, sharing the most liberal of the then orthodox doctrines." Quite enough for the ordinary man but scarcely for the foremost man of the day. In regard to the disputed question as to whether Mather, when attempting to get a charter in England for the colony, wished to retain the old religious test for the franchise, Doctor Murdock points out, in addition to other evidence, that Mather would hardly do so in view of the fact that the people had themselves agreed to abandon it. There is no question here, then, of whether Mather was in advance of his time. It is only whether he was behind it. In following the story of his life, so ably told by the author, we find only one occasion when he was appreciably far ahead of his generation, and that was in his advocacy of inoculation for small-pox. If, then, we accept the description of Mather as the foremost American Puritan, we must confess that the man who occupied that position was, at best, content to be drawn into the more liberal tendencies eddying around him; that he did not advance beyond them; that he did not lead his community to any higher point of view or wider sympathies than were shared by his enlightened contemporaries; and that he did not harken to the voices of those who, from time to time, would have done so.

Doctor Murdock in the prosecution of his second purpose, presents the most favorable view that is possible of the Puritan régime. It is well that both sides of the story be given, but the reader may be warned that if those who see it in a darker light than Doctor Murdock have sometimes been entangled in prejudice, he himself is not always free. Occasionally he sets up a man of straw to knock down, for what historian could ever have maintained that the people at the time of Andros were "delighted" at losing their assembly or "reveling" in the chance to pay taxes? Moreover he is occasionally inclined to confuse Boston and Harvard with "New England," somewhat as an eighteenth century writer once spoke of "the hemisphere of Massachusetts." To say that certain books were in Mather's library or that "at least" one public library owned Locke and Clarendon, is not to deny that the current literary output in England did not reach "the vast majority of New Englanders." That majority lived quite outside the confines of Boston—in Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island and Connecticut. Again, for example, Randolph's personal effort to prevent Mather's sailing for England cannot be maintained as a charge against the Andros administration without further evidence.

It is possible that no one, with the best intentions, can write of Puritan New England entirely free from unconscious bias. We are no longer stirred by the dead theological and ecclesiastical controversies of those times, but Puritanism as an attitude toward life, both for one's self and others, is still a living issue, apart from any sectional prejudice as related to the past. Doctor Murdock's book, however, is to be welcomed for presenting an older point of view in terms of modern scholarship, and for giving us an admirable picture of a leading figure of early New England. We can understand Mather far better for Doctor Murdock's labors, even though we may not always echo his praises.

JAMES TRUSLOW ADAMS.

De Anti-Christi Natura

H. L. Mencken, by Ernest Boyd. New York: Robert M. McBride. 89 pages. $1.

The Man Mencken: A Biographical and Critical Survey, by Isaac Goldberg. New York: Simon and Schuster. 388 pages. $4.

WHAT are we to infer from the appearance in a single season of two books about a writer who (see Mr. Goldberg's appendix of Menckenian juvenilia) was nothing when not critical? Is American criticism finding a market as well as growing up? Has the "booboisie" decided not merely to love its enemies but to applaud its critics? If the "Bible Belt" gagged at Sherman on Lewis can it be expected to gulp Boyd and Goldberg on the "Baltimore Anti-Christ"?

These are not rhetorical questions and the answer to them is No. The "alfalfa gelehrten" will doubtless read these treatises, not however as Oedipus consulting oracles but because Henry Louis Mencken, like the late Colonel Roosevelt whom he deprecates and superficially resembles, becomes not pale but diabolically vivid under the white light of public exposure. Even a crisp monograph like Mr. Boyd's, much more a full-length dissertation like Mr. Goldberg's, doth something smack. Around the latter, especially, lick the lambent tongues of the fire that is not quenched.

Mr. Boyd, it is true, begins in the odor rather of sanctity than brimstone. Mephistopheles is dehorned, domesticated.

> Yes, has he a Sister!
> Yea, hath he a Mother!
> O God! O Baltimore!

Somewhat in this tone, quaintly reminiscent of great bards, Mr. Boyd warbles on for nineteen pages—enough to put the Maryland Free Stater through the wash and wring him out 100 percent American. To Mr. Goldberg is left the vulgar but eternal chant of Beer, Beer, Beer; the sinister aside, "makes no pretense to celibacy"; and the sordid episode of Saucy Stories and The Parisienne.

The third and final chapter of H. L. Mencken weighs him not as The American but as The Critic. It too is short. Here, like the waves at Dover, Mr. Boyd is obliged to "bring the eternal note of sadness in," though instead of referring loftily to Sophocles he quotes Mr. Rascoe. Prescient as the Chesapeake sage's record shows him on Dreiser, Lardner, Huneker, Ade, and certain lesser fry like O'Neill, Cabell, Cather, Hergesheimer, and Anderson, he has lately fallen so low as to write for the Nation and the New Republic, and in the publishers' ads he is "now quoted more often than William Lyon Phelps." Mr. Goldberg is fully cognizant of these regrettable lapses, but he does not find them symptomatic of moral decay.

Another reason why these books about Mr. Mencken may by some be read but not believed is that few sophisticated persons have ever cherished any faith in criticism by contemporaries, and most of those few lost it before this year of grace. The people who now read criticism read it exactly as they read Cabell or Cooper—to escape from a world the defects of which seem too obvious to require critical diagnosis and too profound to be prescribed for. No one knows this better than H. L. M. The closing measures of Mr. Goldberg's Da Capo present the Fiend in person, "his face lighted up with an unholy glow. 'Criticism! Criticism!' he rasped as he stretched his arms in relief . . . 'It's all an illusion! An illusion!' " If Mr. Boyd's finale is in part plaintively minor, Mr. Goldberg ends on a crashing dissonance.

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With the hellish aureole actually visible to the naked eye we now perceive that Mr. Mencken's puritanical realism denies him even illusions about himself. And we return to Mr. Boyd's middle and longest chapter bearing several grains of pure salt as well as sulphur. Like all Mr. Boyd's writing it is brilliantly incisive, yet it scarcely reveals The Philosopher. Mr. Mencken's usefulness (and violently as I disagree with many of his opinions I can think of no critical practitioner who is anything like so entertaining), Mr. Mencken's usefulness lies in the disassociation of ideas, as announced by Rémy de Gourmont and desiderated by Mr. Mencken himself when he deplores the prevailing distrust of aught save constructive criticism.

No confidence is violated if a "rustic Ph. D." acknowledges that even the historical method is a two-edged tool. Why should we demand of expressionistic criticism that it prove less fallible or inconsistent? The collected essays are entitled Prejudices: this modesty should have been disarming. But the dwindling circles where the author is still referred to as "the unspeakable Mencken" insist on rationalizing what is frankly proffered as not much more rational than cerebrated whim. Mr. Goldberg appears to grasp this fundamental though unimportant truth more clearly than Mr. Boyd.

As a matter of course their interesting subject repudiates any description of his activities as noble, moral, or charitable. Yet Mr. Goldberg, whose pages run the entire gamut from conventional chronology to profound insight, emphasizes the importance of Mr. Mencken's contribution to the uplift. Whether this prophet's service to his fellow-countrymen will bulk large or small on the scroll of history will depend on what happens to these United States. If they pull up short of resolving themselves into a goose-stepping paradise dedicated to one long tag-day, it will be H. L. Mencken's fault more than any other's. While Ph. D.'s, rustic and urban, are timidly persuading bewildered undergraduates to read Self-Reliance, the Baltimorean bawls his warning straight into the ear of conscious America. It is not unpleasing to find his biographers establishing him in the authentic New England tradition.

But will they make his yawp any more intelligible to Babbitt? I doubt it, and so doubtless do they. No one will ever detain the go-getting wedding-guest to listen to Mencken's appalling story save Mencken himself, who is a superior go-getter. But if you have already submitted to the clutched lapel you will enjoy Mr. Boyd's shrewd analysis and Mr. Goldberg's luminous survey of a critic who is beginning to throw in tentative modulations out of C Major.

HAZELTON SPENCER.

The Man Renoir

Renoir: An Intimate Record, by Ambroise Vollard. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 248 pages. $3.

RENOIR, who refused to be finally ticketed with the Impressionists or to become enmeshed in the ponderous theories of the critics, has a sympathetic biographer in M. Vollard. Since time alone can pass ultimate judgment on the artist, M. Vollard has taken as his less pretentious but more entertaining task the preservation of what must otherwise inevitably be lost—the quick spirit of the man. Thus he is that welcome biographer whose purpose is not to exploit, but to project as roundly as possible the figure of his subject. Presenting his material in the form of conversations with Renoir, he remains the intelligently inquiring reporter, draws his friend out with crafty questions, and even feigns ignorance in order to goad Renoir into heated refutation of the elaborate formulæ of the "professors."

The casual strokes with which the conversations are put together—a literary method singularly appropriate to a discussion of Renoir—build a picture more complete than their apparently artless form at first suggests: the incidents of the artist's early life, his household, including the maids, who functioned perhaps better in the studio than in the kitchen; Madame Charpentier's salon; the collectors; Zola, Cézanne, and Rodin, whose heavy dignity is not too flatteringly contrasted with Renoir's own simplicity, and finally the sturdy character and nimble wit of the painter himself. A saving dash of the petit bourgeois gave piquancy to Renoir's art and opinions. "A woman's hands are lovely—if they are accustomed to housework," he said, not sentimentally, but because, unlike the eighteenth century painters with whom he had certain affinities, he saw the queen in the bonne rather than the make-believe shepherdess in the princess. This robustness of outlook keeps him immune from the accusation of prettiness. He could grow eloquent over the possibilities of ivory-black as a color, but when it came to generalities, he insisted only that there be joy in the work. "I have always tried to paint human beings just as I would beautiful fruit," he told M. Vollard, and his catholic delight in the manifestations of the visible world gives his art its particular bloom, the freshness that is so admirably suggested in the informal pages of this book.

ROSE MARY FISCHKIN.

Letters from England

Letters from England, by Karel Capek. New York: Doubleday, Page and Company. 192 pages. $2.

WHAT can a strange writer say about an unfamiliar country? A hundred heads are scratched, a hundred brows knitted, over this question every year; for with all our opportunities for travel, it has become less and less possible to write about "things seen" without treading through deep ruts of banality. Dr. Karel Capek, fortunately, brought himself to England: and that partly solved the question. He shows us all the familiar landmarks of the country—and his impish humor suddenly makes them live again. He was maddened by the perpetual houses with two pillars and five steps; he was depressed by the dreary brick fen of the East End; he was obliterated by the roar of traffic in the Strand; he was gratified by the immemorial trees of the English parkland; and through it all he remained naive and spontaneous; with the result that these staid English respectabilities suddenly seem as outlandish as a Congo village. No wonder the English have welcomed these letters with a self-conscious titter: we are we, and that's that! Dr. Capek for good measure contrives funny little effects in illustration that suggest a collaboration of Mr. Hendrik van Loon and Mr. H. G. Wells, the Wells who illustrated that fine and neglected satire, Boon. Do not be deceived by R. U. R. or the World We Live In: Dr. Capek has a great comic gift; and if the spirit that breathes in these letters would blow over the surface of his plays, it would sweep away the claptrap or the sentimentalism that now dogs them. No one who has been abroad recently will close this book without echoing Wilde's remark to Whistler: "Oh, James! I wish I had written that!"

L. M.

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Saint Samuel of Fleet Street

The Life of Samuel Johnson, by James Boswell. Edited with Notes by Arnold Glover. Two vols. New York: Dutton and Company. 138 pages. $10.

IF this were the age of faith, Dr. Johnson would certainly be Saint Samuel, Fleet Street would be full of holy places where he preached his sermons and performed his miracles, and the Boswells, the Thrales, and the Hawkinses would all be exalted to the rank of prophets. Our age has somehow lost the art of making halces; but a man may fairly be said to be a Saint when cabmen, who can scarcely be said to secrete Rasselas in their pockets, quote Johnson's sayings or invent Johnson's sayings on a wet night in the Strand, as a writer in the Times has lately heard them doing. Then, indeed, he has eaten his way into the fabric of life and performs all the functions of the gods, presiding over the fortunes of men, and inspiring, albeit he wears a wig, a snuff-colored coat, rolls as he walks, and has a gluttonous appetite for dinner. There can be no doubt—these two new editions, this abridgement of the famous biography show it—that Dr. Johnson has proved himself of the stuff that Saints are made of, and if we were to hazard a guess at the reason, it would be that he is one of the very few human beings who love their kind. Every other good quality is to be had in profusion; this alone is rare, as can be proved by counting those who can unanimously be said to possess it. One might begin with Christ and Socrates; add Shakespeare and Montaigne; perhaps Sir Thomas Browne. Then, if we confine our search to the British Isles, whom do we find? Milton is hopelessly out of the running; so are Wycherley, Swift, Pope, Congreve. The names of statesmen and soldiers do not leap to the mind. Pepys, for all his defects, is a possible candidate; Lamb stands as good a chance as any, but it is Dr. Johnson, the coarse, moody, rough-tempered man, who possesses, by virtue perhaps of his coarseness and his moodiness, the peculiar sympathy, the majestic tolerance, the broad humor, which, when he has been in his grave a century and a half, still make the cabmen think of him on a wet night in the Strand.

That this myth-making quality springs from some personal ascendancy, and has little to do with intellect or art is clear. People who have never read a word of Johnson's writings are inspired by this power in him to add to the myth from their own stores, by which means alone he is assured of immortality. His figure, at least, will never dry up and dwindle away; always somebody will be dabbing a fresh handful of clay on the surface. Whether the myth thus created will not, in process of time, altogether cease to resemble the actual man remains to be proved. The religion may entirely misinterpret the founder. But in Johnson's case the test is near at hand and easy to apply. There are his books—The Rambler, the Vanity of Human Wishes, the Tour to the Hebrides, the Lives of the Poets, and it cannot be denied that they fix and refine features which, under the influence of the myth-makers, tend to wobble and to spread. In the first place they make us revise that part of the legend which will have it, for the fun of exaggeration partly, that Johnson labored always under what Canon Ainger called "the Johnsonian incubus." He was pompous and sententious and Latin. It took all Lamb's genius to liberate English prose from the thrall. With this in mind we open the Lives of the Poets, and what do we find? A prose which, beside our daily diet of Times leaders and statesmen's letters, appears brief, pointed, almost elegant; which alights with all its feet neatly together for the most part and exactly upon its meaning; which indulges frequently in a thrust or lunge of phrase of the utmost vigor and vivacity. "Among this lagging race of frosty grovellers he might still have risen into eminence," and so on. The words occur in that life of Milton which is more often quoted as an example of the perversity of the great critic's judgment than of the grace and elasticity of his style. And he goes on, warped by one of those prejudices which tend to twist his judgment from the straight, to comment a little censoriously upon "a kind of respect, perhaps unconsciously paid to the great man by his biographers; every house in which he resided is historically mentioned, as if it were an injury to neglect naming any place which he honored by his presence." That respect is now far more profusely lavished upon Johnson than upon Milton.

VIRGINIA WOOLF.

The Panchatantra

The Panchatantra, translated from the Sanskrit by Arthur W. Ryder. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press. 470 pages. $4.

HUMAN society is God's zoölogical garden. Animals in human guise are masquerading in Vanity Fair. There are cunning foxes and silly geese, monkeys and donkeys, cuckoos and strutting peahens. About 200 B. C., Indian animal lore was polished up in Five Books (panchatantra) of fables. This Hindu Pentameron was rearranged as a Thousand Nights in Persia. The Indo-Iranian stories, spiced with the fragrance of sandalwood and all the exotic aroma of Araby, were metamorphosed into the Arabian Nights, delightful tales of wizards, thieves and fairies, Bagdad bazaars and sluggish caravans, bound east for Samarkand and Kandahar. An Arab recast existed in the tenth century, and another Night was added in the twelfth. Not even the Indian original has gripped the world's interest as have the Arabian Night's Entertainments.

The Panchatantra is meant to be a mirror of worldly prudence, for the government and guidance of young princes. The morals taught are utterly utilitarian, Machiavellian; expediency is virtue! Mr. Ryder has acquitted himself of his task very well. His translation is readable, but the verses are sometimes hackneyed.

ERNEST P. HORRWITZ.

Thunder on the Left

Thunder on the Left, by Christopher Morley. New York: Doubleday, Page and Company. $2.

MR. MORLEY'S intention in this pleasant, ruminative novel is not entirely clear. Combining realism and fancy, he leaves us a little lost between the two. The theme is a quadrangle: a man and wife, and two strangers who nearly steal into their hearts. The background is Maine seaside: blue air, bare sands and a light wistful holiday breeze. There is another background, too: children, upon whom Mr. Morley spends much love, and too much whimsicality. At the beginning we are charmed, if also puzzled; toward the end we are more puzzled than charmed. The title, though amply fortified with quotations, remains somewhat of a mystery. The thunder that echoes through the book is mild thunder, the faint tremors in the human heart when the desirable stranger comes up,

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hovers within the reach of possible possession, and passes on.

Mr. Morley, the surface of whose novel is so carefully adorned with colors inextricably blended from a palette bearing philosophy, humor, observation, beauty, also goes below the surface. His main characters reveal themselves less in public than in secret soliloquies which show the currents underneath the polite exterior mask. There is much wisdom in these glimpses, but it is often suspiciously like Mr. Morley's own wisdom—his signature is upon it, and it lacks the anonymous quality by which characters allowed to speak for themselves separate their individuality from their author's. At the end one feels that a layer of essay has been laid on ground seeded with novel. The novel sprouts up through the essay, to be sure, but only in patches.

M. H.

Recent Fiction

Dancers in the Wind, by Allan Updegraff. New York: Boni and Liveright. $2.

DAS EWIG WEIBLICHE, strictly up to date, is Mr. Updegraff's preoccupation. A modern hermit, keeping house cosily on some not too remote Berkshire hillside, reviews for us three devastating matrimonial ventures, and is yet unable to resist a fourth enchantress. Of plot there is the merest thread, yet it suffices for the stringing together of the various grotesqueries which arise from Man's inability to live either with or without Woman. Of pleasant reading there is a goodly bit—speculation which turns and turns again upon the axis of sex. There is a gaiety which carries on, even against an occasional top-heaviness. And finally, one notes with a mild astonishment that what sets out as airy sophistication ends upon a note of sheer wistfulness. This does but endear Mr. Updegraff to his readers. He is, then, like most of the world, groping. And pricelessly he sums it all up for us, our pursuits and our pains—"There is no great happiness without a small headache."

E. B. H.

Bred in the Bone, by Elsie Singmaster. New York: Houghton Mifflin Company. $2.50.

THESE tales of the "plain people" of rural Pennsylvania are refreshing, not only in the admirable simplicity of their style, but in the realization they bring to us "light half-believers in our casual creeds" of lives actually conducted by conscience, and that as a matter of course. These dwellers in an austere Arcady know pain and triumph, passion and despair — but not confusion. Their darkest hours—some of which Miss Singmaster has depicted with tragic and even sinister skill—are *simple* suffering, endured with the dignity of undistracted souls. There are tales, too, of quiet humor, some even with a satiric quirk. But the real achievement of the artist is in presenting the lives of saints as credible — and, in some strange manner, successful.

D. B. W.

Tales of the Long Bow, by G. K. Chesterton. New York: Dodd, Mead and Company. $2.

THESE stories are agreeable bits of fanciful froth spiced with all the wit we anticipate in any utterance of Chesterton's. English wits seem endlessly capable of stimulating, if not satisfying, the American appetite, and this particular soufflé d'oranges will tickle the literary palate, fulfilling at the same time the ideal of the Compleat Epicure in enabling the reader to rise from the table hungry.

D. B. W.

Herbs and Apples, by Helen Hooven Santmyer. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. $2.

THE pattern of a woman's life has ever been a lure to the pen of the novelist. Miss Santmyer believes in the dignity of unsuccess met firmly. A not unworthy motive—but Miss Santmyer is lacking in the ability to sift her material so as to make it sustain her theme, and the narrative drags accordingly. Her backgrounds also are uneven. Her Tecumseh, in its haze of golden dust, its fields and hillsides, is wholly vivid and beautiful. Her New York is drab and flat. And be it said in mournful candor, her college atmosphere is juvenile and dreary. Yet scattered through this oddly compounded book are passages of a breath-taking delicacy and poignancy, of insight and power beyond cavil.

E. B. H.

"...and They Lived Happily Ever After," by Meredith Nicholson. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. $2.

JEERS from the sophisticate, tears from the regenerate, will greet this simple story of a downtrodden husband, a misguided wife and a Noble Woman who is a clumsily-modelled caryatid of the marriage system. No one of the characters really lives, nor does any phase of the situation ring true. This is a poor tract and a worse novel —which may not stand in the way of its success.

D. B. W.

Contributors

STUART CHASE is the author of The Tragedy of Waste and is a member of the Labor Bureau of New York.

F. J. SCHLINK is a mechanical engineer-physicist, specializing in standardization and specification work. He was formerly technical assistant to the Director of the Bureau of Standards.

HAROLD J. LASKI who was formerly an instructor at Harvard, is at present connected with the London School of Economics.

SIDNEY B. FAY, professor of modern European history at Smith College, is a member of the Board of Editors of the American Historical Review, and author of articles on the origin of the War.

JAMES TRUSLOW ADAMS, author of Founding of New England, is a contributor to various magazines. The third and last volume of his New England series will be published next spring.

HAZELTON SPENCER is a member of the English department of the State College of Washington.

ROSE MARY FISCHKIN, a graduate of the University of Chicago, is on the staff of the Art Institute of Chicago.

VIRGINIA WOOLF is the author of The Voyage Out, Jacob's Room, Mrs. Dalloway, and the Common Reader.

ERNEST P. HORRWITZ, lecturer on the World's Literature at Hunter College, was formerly professor of Sanskrit at Dublin University.

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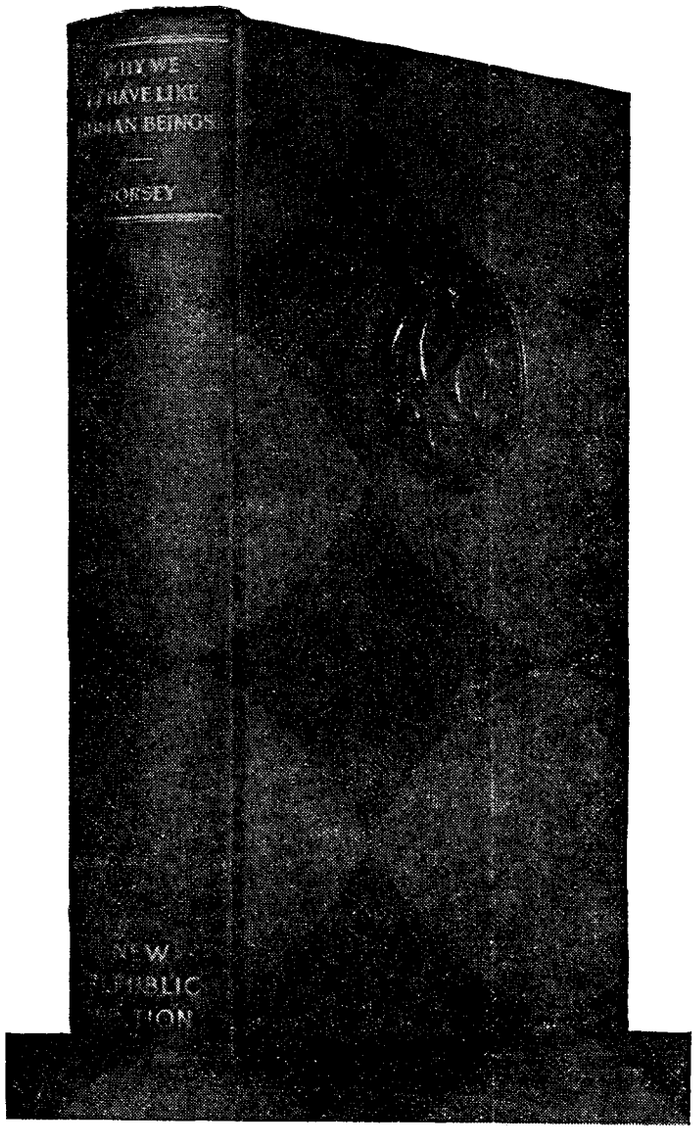

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I See By the Papers

that Heywood Broun is getting really wise to "that excellent new book," as he calls it—Why We Behave Like Human Beings, by George A. Dorsey. Ludie did his best the other day to fill the column, but collapsed about twenty yards from the finish. With his customary perspicacity Mr. Broun called on the learned doctor. The transition was a bit sudden, but the column was completed with a magnificent burst of speed. Dr. Dorsey is good for many more.*

Indeed, the great advantage of this author, as a space filler, is obvious once you give him a trial. You don't have to waste time digging around for quotable passages. You get back from one of those famous roof garden parties, where you have seen economists and judges and biologists and behaviorists for once behaving like human beings, pleasantly tired and unpleasantly concerned about the copy for this sacred page. What to do! Can do! You open the Dorsey. Anywhere. And grab.

If you hit upon a passage about eagles and wings and hands, you can tie it up in a jiffy with what you had already written. If Ludie is on your mind (Ludie is Mr. Broun's hookie-playing Airedale), and you happen to come upon something about the biologic significance of color, and the relative highness and lowness of Caucasians and Ethiopians, it is just as simple. Or, if you turn to The Endrocine Glands and the Causes of Death, you don't have to look for a tie-up at all. Just quote.

All of which is to say, as this page has said several times before, that Why We Behave Like Human Beings is about the most readable wisdom you are likely to come across. That is, the most easily absorbable. Wisdom, truly absorbed, makes for humanity. You will be a being more human than ever once you let Dr. Dorsey tell you why you behave like one already.

* Since the foregoing was written another Dorsey column has appeared, and the book has become for Mr. Broun, as it is rapidly becoming for many another, "the most interesting book he has read in a year."

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